A LETTER OF ENQUIRY TO The Reverend Fathers OF THE Society of Jesus.

Written in the Person of a Dissatisfied Roman Catholick.

By Mr Taylor

Imprimatur.

Octob. 26. 1688. Hen. Wharton, R^mo in Christo P. ac D. D. Wilhelmo Archiep. Cant. a Sacris Domest.

LONDON: Printed for *William Rogers* at the *Sun* in *Fleet-street*; and *Samuel Smith* at the *Princes Arms* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard. MDCLXXXIX.

LETTER

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IN PRIMATIS.

Gen. Wharton, Rev. in Christo Pae D.D. Vil-Imo Archiep. Cant. a Sacris Domest.

LONDON: Printed for Robert Kettle, at the Bible [illegible] and [illegible] Cornhill, [illegible] XXXIX.

Advertiſement.

COuld I believe it fit to Lye for GOD, or that Truth needed the ſervice of Falſhood, I might have been tempted to imitate the Tricks and Deceiving Arts of the Romiſh Factors (for in Charity, we muſt ſuppoſe ſome of them at leaſt, to believe what they ſay to be Truth, and that their Cauſe is that of GOD) and boldly have ſent this Letter abroad, as really writ by a Romaniſt: But as I am a Member of a Church, whoſe Superſtructures, as well as her Foundation is the pure Truth, (and one that is reſolv'd to follow Truth and Charity wherever they lead me) ſo I ſhould think that I deſerv'd the ſevere puniſhment of being depriv'd of the happineſs of her Communion, if I endeavour'd to ſerve her Intereſts by any means ſo contrary to her Nature and Manner of dealing with Mankind. But as 'tis no improbable ſuppoſition, that there ſhould be ſome Diſſatisfied, or Doubting, or Inquiſitive Perſon in the Romiſh Communion; ſo neither can it, I hope, be injurious or offenſive to any, openly to declare, That I who make theſe Enquiries, am a Layman of the Church of England: and that I make them in the Perſon of a Roman Catholick, is for no other reaſon, but only to preſerve a better Decorum, and the more to affect the Perſons for whoſe ſake I chiefly Publiſh this Letter. And with all the Charity and Good-will, that one Chriſtian owes to another, I do humbly beſeech every Roman Catholick, that believes he has a Soul to be ſav'd, and values its Salvation above being of this or that Party, or ſerving a Cauſe, or the greateſt worldly Intereſt, ſeriouſly for once, to ſuppoſe himſelf

this Diſſatisfied, *or* Doubting, *or* Inquiring *Perſon, and let him in the Name of* GOD *lay his Hand upon his Heart, and conſider whether theſe* Enquiries *are not pertinent and rational, and if they be, I beg him impartially, and as he will anſwer it at the Great Day, to weigh the Anſwers that may by his* Party *be return'd to them, whether he be really and fully ſatisfied that they are juſt and rational. I confeſs,* Diſſatisfied, Doubting, *and* Inquiſitive *Perſons, cannot be ſo frequent in a* Church, *where they are taught ſolely and* blindly *to rely upon their* Paſtors *and Spiritual* Guides, *and generally ſpeaking do ſo, as in a* Church *which gives a modeſt liberty of* trying the Spirits, *and of examining and enquiring into the reaſon and truth of things. But yet for all that, my Converſation with Perſons of that Communion, is not ſo little, as to ſuffer me to believe, but that there are a great many whoſe Underſtandings are not ſo muffled, nor ſo far enſlav'd, but that ſometimes they entertain ſerious Thoughts, and take a free View of* Religion, *and the nature of it, and reflect with what* artifice and fraud *it is manag'd in the* Church of Rome, *and that they do believe, when they think ſoberly, that the* Reformation *is not an effect of* Pride, *or* Folly, *or* Worldly Intereſt, *as their crafty deſigning* Prieſts *would perſwade them. This granted me, ſuch Perſons then may reaſonably be preſum'd (that if either they would give themſelves the trouble, or durſt) to think it neceſſary thus to Addreſs themſelves to the* Jeſuits, *who have aſſum'd to themſelves the Reputation of the beſt* Spiritual Guides.

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Reverend Fathers,

SINCE 'tis thought by a great many, that you are the only Oracles of Learning and Knowledge of any *Order* in our *Church*, it will not be wondred at, that I particularly Addreſs this *Letter of Enquiry* to you. *Faith* no more then *Love* can be forc'd, they are both free Agents. I am diſſatisfied, doubt, and am at a ſtand, about many Points in our Religion. I have a juſt reverence for the *Antiquity* of our Church, but yet I know *Error* is older than ſhe, and *Truth* than either of them. I have no worldly Intereſt to ſerve by being of this or that *Party* or *Church*. But if I had, I hope I ſhould prefer the Happineſs of a Life that is *Eternal*, before that of a ſhort and uncertain ſtay here. For this reaſon, 'tis poſſible, I may want one great and moving Argument, which at this *Juncture* eſpecially, many have; for 'tis not this *World's* Riches or Honours that I look after: ſo that if I were even at *Rome* itſelf, the great and ſplendid Allûrements there, would not operate upon me. No, *Reverend Fathers*, 'tis pure *Truth and Holineſs* which I am in ſearch of; for I am ſtrongly perſwaded, that without the poſſeſſion of theſe, it is a moſt unreaſonable confidence for any Man to hope to ſee *GOD*, who is Truth and Holineſs itſelf; and therefore their Contraries muſt needs be odious to his *Divine* Majeſty. In a word, *Reverend Fathers*, my whole Deſign here in this World is, firſt to know God's Will, and then to obey and pleaſe him, that through the Merits of my dear *Saviour*, I may be admitted into ſome degree of his Glories hereafter. Now if you can remove my *Doubts*, and ſatisfie me by a juſt Anſwer to every *Enquiry*, in this my *Letter*, I ſhall rejoyce to remain where I have been born and bred. But if you cannot, I hope I ſhall deſpiſe the hard and unjuſt Thoughts and Cenſures of Men, and ſo far overcome the *Power and Prejudices of Education and Cuſtom*, as to ſearch for, and embrace *Truth*, in what *Communion* ſoever I find her, in ſpight of all temptations and hinderances. Our *Repreſenter* ſays, *That every*

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Man muſt work out his own Salvation with fear and trembling: if ſo, *Reverend Fathers*, you muſt pardon me, if hereafter I take a more particular care of *mine*, even to the forſaking of your Communion, in caſe I cannot meet with ſatisfaction in it, and by following the clear Commands of Holy *Scripture*, the Dictates of *right* Reaſon, and the aſſiſtances of the *honeſt and knowing Guides* of another *Church*.

But before I come to the main buſineſs of my *Letter*, give me leave *Reverend Fathers*, to acquaint you with the ground and occaſion of it; and that was my reading the *Engliſh* Tranſlation of the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, lately by ſome of our Church ſet out here. For indeed till then, and as I had not the perfect uſe of the *Latin* Tongue, and always living in a blind and ſtupid obedience and reliance upon the honeſty and learning of my Guides, I was ignorant of many neceſſary things, and thought our *Church* never had, nor never could have any thing in her *Doctrines Worſhip and Service*, either *Idolatrous or Superſtitious*, or that any of her Children ever was, or ever could poſſibly be guilty of either; or that any Errors or Abuſes could creep into our Church; and much leſs, that any of her *Paſtors* and *Teachers*, would betray their poor *ignorant Sheep* into thoſe dangers. But now, God be prais'd, I am otherwiſe convinc'd, and that chiefly by reading and conſidering thoſe very *Decrees of Trent*, together with the *Catechiſm* of the Council of *Trent*, now lately alſo publiſh'd in *Engliſh*. For in many places of thoſe *Decrees*, the *Council* ſhews a great fear (and ſo far certainly 'tis highly to be commended) leaſt the People ſhould run into *Superſtition and Idolatry*. Now, I conſider, that if there was no danger from the *Nature*, *or from the Uſe and Practice* of our *Worſhip* and *Service*, ſuch a concern as the *Council* ſhew'd, had been much below the Wiſdom of ſo great an Aſſembly. So that a thinking Man cannot forbear concluding, that there was very great danger of the Peoples committing *Idolatry and Superſtition*, at leaſt from the very uſe and performing of the *then Worſhip and Service*. However, I would fain hope, that tho' there are ſome things in this *Council*, that look too like *Superſtition and Idolatry*; yet, becauſe we magnifie it for ſo Wiſe and Holy, that it has in Truth Defin'd and Decreed nothing that ſo much as miniſters or tempts to thoſe grievous Sins. For ſince it was in the *Council's* Power, not only to have actually *redreſs'd all Abuſes* and

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Corruptions, but also to have prevented all future danger of that kind; and yet if it can be made appear, that it has done neither, but rather has still more expos'd Mankind to these Sins, I cannot for my life see how it can be acquitted of Hypocrisie and Deceit, towards the poor *ignorant* People, which make up, I doubt, the far greatest part of our *Church*: And that, provided the *Council* might advance the Riches and Grandure of the *Church and Clergy*, it car'd not what became of Mens *Souls*, whom the wise and good GOD thought worth redeeming, by the precious Blood of his dear *Son*. Suffer me, *Reverend Fathers*, to give you an instance or two, of this *Council's seeming Care* to keep Men from *Superstition and Idolatry*; and which also first let in some light to my dark and ignorant mind.

'In the 22 *Session*, and the *Decree concerning the Celebration of* 'the *Mass*, the *Bishops* are order'd, to take care to prohibit and re-'move those things which *Superstition* (the false Imitatress of 'true Piety) or *Covetousness* hath introduced; and speak against 'the *Servitude*, I suppose, that is, the *Worship* of *Idols*: And also 'it is there commanded, that a certain number of certain *Mas-'ses* and *Candles*, which was rather invented by a *Superstitious* 'Worship, than by *true* Religion, should be taken away. And 'again, in the 25 *Session*, and the *Decree concerning Purgatory*, the '*Bishops* are commanded not to suffer any thing, but to prohi-'bit every thing which *tends to Superstition*. And in her *Decree* 'concerning the Invocation of Saints, &c. she earnestly desires that 'all *Superstition* in the Invocation of Saints, Worshipping of Re-'licks, and in the Holy Use of Images, may be taken away. 'And last of all, in the Continuation of her 25 *Session*, she speaks 'against *Superstition and Ignorance*.

Now, *Reverend Fathers*, finding this *wonderful General Council* to speak so plainly against these Crimes of *Superstition and Idolatry*, and also against *Ignorance*, and observing it so much concern'd for the People, and to give such great caution and charge to the Bishops about them, and our Adversaries continually taxing us with these Sins, you cannot surely blame me, or be the least offended, that I take the best way I can devise, not only to preserve my self from them, but also others in our Church, who I doubt, may as much want information and help in these matters. And this indeed is one reason, why I chuse rather to *enquire* of you in this *publick* manner, than in a *private* way: for

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I consider, that that *Love* is not *Christian*, which is confin'd to one's self, its Nature being communicative. And since *Charity* to our *Neighbour* is an indispensible Duty, How can it be better exercis'd than about the *Soul*?

Pardon, *Reverend Fathers*, this necessary Account of that which gave birth to my *Letter*. And because it will consist of things different in their nature, permit me, for the more clear and orderly proceeding and greater satisfaction, to divide it into several *Sections*, as well as *Queries*. And take it not ill, that I propose to ye the Difficulties I labour under, with that freedom and openness, which only becomes a pure *lover* and *searcher* of *Truth*, and one that considers nothing but *GOD* and his own *Soul* concern'd in the *Enquiry*. And I humbly beg you to give a *direct, full, and clear* Answer to every *Enquiry*, in each *Section*; or a good reason why you cannot, or will not.

SECTION I.

Quere I. WHat might be the reason, *Reverend Fathers*, why the Council of *Trent* did not define and describe *Idolatry and Superstition*, especially when it so often mentions these Crimes, and cautions People against them; does not this proceeding make a thinking Man apt to believe, that they were conscious, that the then *Practice, and Worship, and Doctrines*, were faulty in that kind, and so were afraid of having them discover'd by such an honest dealing; but yet were willing to appear to condemn them in *general* terms; for even at that time, was it not too gross to have declar'd for down-right Idolatry, or Superstition?

Quere II. What might those things be, which the Council in the 22 Session orders *Bishops* to take care *to prohibit and remove*, and which it observ'd, *were introduc'd by Superstition and Covetousness*? But had it not lookt more honest, and more becoming Christian Bishops, to have told what these things were?

Quere III. What was that *Servitude* or Worship of *Idols* it speaks against in the same Session, in the *Decree concerning the Things to be observ'd and eschew'd in the Celebration of the Mass*? Did the Priest or the People Worship *Idols* when Mass was said? Pray *Reverend Fathers*, declare the truth to me in this matter,

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my mind is much perplex'd about it. For I find our preſent *Diſputers* ſtiſly maintain, that our Doctrine and Worſhip is now the very ſame that it was at the time of the Council of *Trent*, and at that time the ſame it was from the beginning: I profeſs I tremble as often as I go to Maſs, and ſhall do ſo till I am better ſatisfied herein?

Quere IV. What was that certain Number of *Maſſes and Candles*, which in the ſame *Decree* the *Council* ſays was rather invented by a *Superſtitious Worſhip, than by true Religion*? Are they according to the Council's Command taken away? And when, and where were they ſo taken away?

Quere V. What does the *Council* mean in her *Decree concerning Purgatory*, by commanding the *Biſhops not to ſuffer any thing, but to prohibit every thing which tends to Superſtition*. Pray *Reverend Fathers* what was it, which at that time did tend to *Superſtition* in the Peoples Practice and Worſhip, in *Praying for the Dead*, or the Souls in *Purgatory*? and is it taken away? and have we nothing yet remaining and in uſe among us, and in our preſent Practice, that is either *Superſtitious* or tends to it?

Quere VI. What was that *Superſtition in the Invocation of Saints, Worſhipping of Relicks, and in the Holy Uſe of Images*, which the Council in *Seſſion* 25, ſo earneſtly deſir'd might be taken away? And is that Superſtition taken away? Can none of our Communion be guilty of this Sin now? Is there now no danger for us in theſe matters? What aſſurance can you, *Reverend Fathers*, give us?

Quere VII. But *Reverend Fathers*, If there was no danger from the very Nature of the Service and Worſhip then in uſe in our Churches, why did that *wiſe Council*, ſhew ſuch a needleſs concern and fear. But if there was danger, and the *Council* ſays there was, why did it not declare plainly and openly, wherein particularly the danger lay? Doubtleſs the Council know it, and ſince it has not told us particularly wherein, and in what manner the danger of *Superſtition* lay, How is it poſſible for any Man to acquit the *Council* from *Hypocriſie and Deceit* towards poor ignorant Souls, which it pretended, and was certainly bound to take care of? How does this *Council's* care of *Souls* appear, ſince the People are now as much in the dark about the nature of *Superſtition* and *Idolatry*, and wherein the danger lies in *the Invocation of Saints, and Worſhipping Relicks and Images, and Prayers*

for the Dead, as before the Council met; becauſe it only cautions them in general againſt ſuch Sins, but never particularly tells them how they ſhould know, or avoid them, which yet methinks had been the honeſter courſe?

Quere VIII. Again, *Reverend Fathers*, the Council of *Trent* ſeems very ſenſible that the People in the then *current* Worſhip and Service of the Church, were guilty of *Idolatry and Superſtition*, and reprov'd them for it, and commanded a Reformation. Now *Reverend Fathers*, I humbly enquire, Is our Worſhip and Service the ſame now, as it was at the time of the Council of *Trent*; if it is, then pray, where is our obedience to that *Council*, and our care of *Souls*? Are not we now as *Idolatrous* and *Superſtitious* as the People were then? Why then is not our Worſhip and Service reform'd? Why are we let alone in an *Idolatrous* and *Superſtitious Worſhip*? But if our Service and Worſhip be altered and purg'd from thoſe groſs Crimes which were in it at the time of the Council of *Trent*, then I deſire to know of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether the *Proteſtants* may not fairly conclude theſe following things againſt us: 1. That our Service and Worſhip, even by the confeſſion of the Council of *Trent*, was then *Idolatrous and Superſtitious*. 2. That this confeſſion juſtifies, at leaſt, the firſt *Reformers*, and alſo the preſent Profeſſors of the *Reform'd* Churches, (unleſs we can make appear that our Service and Worſhip is now free from Superſtition and Idolatry) in their Charge againſt our Church, and their leaving our Communion. 3. That our *Church* is not now the ſame in her Service, and Worſhip, and Doctrines, as ſhe was at the time of the Council of *Trent*; and then pray *Reverend Fathers*, where are all our Boaſts of the *Inerrability* of our Church, and the Infallibility of *Tradition*, and ever continuing the ſame in her Doctrines and Worſhip from Father to Son, ſince our Saviour's and his Apoſtles time? Is not this a terrible inſtance to our Adverſaries of our Innovations and Corruptions? And beyond all Reply, does it not juſtifie all their Complaints and Outcries againſt us for theſe things?

Quere IX. In the ſame *Decree concerning the Celebration of the Maſs*, the Council of *Trent* complains to this effect, That there were ſeveral Innovations, Errors, and Corruptions *crept in by the Vice of Times, or careleſneſs and diſhoneſty of Men about the Sacrifice of the Maſs*. Now I humbly deſire to know of you, *Reverend Fathers*,

Fathers, the preciſe Time *when*, and the very Perſons by *whom* theſe Abuſes and Corruptions crept into the Maſs? The famous Patrons of *Oral Tradition*, and the Maintainers of *a perpetual, and no ways erring Church*, aſſert, That it is abſolutely impoſſible for any Errors and Corruptions ever to creep into our Doctrine and Worſhip. But I am rather inclin'd to believe the *Council of Trent*, who owns that the *very Sacrifice of the Maſs*, which I think we look upon as the greateſt Myſtery, and of the greateſt concern in all our Religion, was then horribly corrupted. But *Reverend Fathers*, if you cannot inform me of the preciſe Times *when*, and the Perſons by *whom* the *Holy Sacrifice of the Maſs* was ſo abus'd, as I have ſome reaſon to fear you cannot, in that caſe, I deſire to know, why we ſhould require that of the *Proteſtants* for the Errors and Corruptions, which they ſay are crept into our Doctrines and Practice, which yet we our ſelves cannot ſhew for thoſe Errors and Abuſes which nevertheleſs we acknowledge to have come in? And why *the Vice of Times, or the careleſneſs and diſhoneſty of Men*, may not be allow'd of, for a good general account, how Abuſes and Corruptions might creep into *Religion*, from the *Proteſtants*, as well as from the *Fathers* of the Council of *Trent*, I humbly deſire to know of you?

Quere X. Whether the generality of Mankind is not naturally inclin'd to *Superſtition and Idolatry*? And whether from theſe paſſages of the Council of *Trent* which I have quoted, it does not appear, that the bent and inclination of the People of our Communion, was at *that* time extreamly towards *Superſtition and Idolatry*? And whether the Fathers of that *Council* have well and honeſtly taken care to ſecure the People from falling into theſe Sins by their *Decrees and Canons*, about Worſhipping the *Hoſt, Angels, and Saints, with their Images and Relicks*? And whether in human probability the not enjoyning theſe things, but direct prohibiting of them, had not been a more likely and a more honeſt way, not only to draw the People off from their then preſent *Superſtitious and Idolatrous* Inclinations and Practice, but alſo to preſerve them from all future danger and guilt of *Superſtition and Idolatry*? And whether there could have been invented by the ſubtilty of the *Devil*, any thing (except returning to down-right *Paganiſm*) more effectually to draw and betray Mankind into theſe Sins of *Superſtition and Idolatry*; and if there could, I deſire you, *Reverend Fathers*, for mine and others ſatisfaction to name it?

Quere XI. Has the *Church of England* any thing in her *Doctrines or Practice*, in her *Liturgy or Worship*, which is either *Superstitious or Idolatrous*, or any way really sinful, or that does but tend to lead her Members into them. And if she has not, as I am apt to believe she has not, because I have never heard that any of our Priests or Writers of Controversie ever charg'd that upon her, then pray *Reverend Fathers*, tell me freely, Whether upon this very account (which ought to be well consider'd by every Person that believes he has a Soul to be saved) she has not a vast advantage of *our Church*; since 'tis so manifest, that even the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* were sensible and confest, that there were then *Superstitious and Idolatrous* Practices in our Church, and that the Members of it might very easily, and without extraordinary care of the *Bishops and Pastors*, fall into *Superstition and Idolatry*?

Quere XII. Pray, *Reverend Fathers*, What *Original* Treatise, Book of Directions, or Sermon, is there set out by our Church to preserve our People from *Idolatry and Superstition*? Some such thing seems to me to be extream necessary after what the Fathers of the Council of *Trent* have said of the danger of the Peoples falling into these Sins, by their use of our *Service and Worship*? Unless you can give some good reason, why the People of our Communion in *this Age*, are wiser then in the Age of the Council of *Trent*.

Quere XIII. But to conclude this Section, I humbly enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, What is the true Definition of *Idolatry and Superstition*? Pray give me such an one of each distinctly and severally, as you'll abide by, and answer to our Learned Adversaries, and be content that all our *Doctrines and Worship and Practice* shall be try'd by. Also such an one as is exactly agreeable to the Holy Scriptures and Definitions of the Fathers and Doctors of the *Ancient Church*. For I consider, that the nature of *Idolatry and Superstition* is the same now as it was then. Be pleas'd likewise, to let your Definition be so full, clear, and certain, as may infallibly (which sure I may request from the Priests of an Infallible Church) guide and direct me, in my *Thoughts, Worship, and Adoration of the Holy Sacrament, or Host, and of the Angels and Saints, and of the Cross and Relicks*, that so I may be safe from all danger of committing or falling into these grievous Sins, or any degree of them. For I infinitely desire to

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have a right Notion of GOD and his Worſhip, and would not offend and affront him, while I think I am pleaſing and doing him honour.

SECT. II.

Quere I. THE Catechiſm of the Council of *Trent*, now lately Publiſh'd in *Engliſh*, p. 344, ſays, That there is *an Honour which is due to GOD alone, and is not to be given to an Angel*: and p. 464, there is a great Charge given, That *what is proper to GOD, be not given to any beſides him.* Now to me it ſeems not a little ſtrange, that in ſo weighty a matter, and wherein both *GOD* and Mankind is ſo much concern'd, that neither the Council of *Trent*, nor this *Catechiſm*, when they had ſo fair occaſions, ſhould not I ſay, freely and plainly tell what that *Honour* and Worſhip is, which is *proper and due to GOD alone*, and wherein it conſiſts, and by what it is ſignified and expreſs'd. This omiſſion is apt to create no very honourable thoughts either of the *Catechiſm*, or *Council*: but ſince neither the Fathers of the *Council*, nor the Compoſers of the *Catechiſm*, thought convenient to do ſo juſt and honeſt a piece of Service to the *Chriſtian* World, ſuffer me here, *Reverend Fathers*, humbly to enquire of you, What is *that Honour and Worſhip which is proper and due to God only*? Wherein does it conſiſt? And by what Words and Acts is it ſignified and expreſs'd?

Quere II. How, and in what, does that *Religious Worſhip* which by our *Church* we are commanded, and which we do give to the *Angels and Saints*, and particularly to the *B. Virgin*, differ from that Worſhip which is *proper to GOD* alone?

Quere III. How, and in what, does that *Honour, Worſhip, or Veneration*, which we give to *Angels and Saints*, and particularly to the *B. Virgin*, differ from that *Honour, Reſpect, or Reverence* we pay to *Kings and Princes, and good Men* upon Earth? By what Words, Acts, or Signs do you diſtinguiſh *this* from *that*?

Quere IV. Whether the ground and reaſon of our *Worſhip of GOD*, be not his Divine, his Infinite, and Incommunicable Attributes and Perfections, ſuch as his Omnipotence, his Omniſcience, and Omnipreſence, *&c.*

Quere V. Whether *Prayer, or Religious Invocation*, has not been always

always lookt on as, and is not, an *eſſential* part of that *Worſhip which is due to GOD alone?* Inſomuch, that *Prayer* is uſually put for the *whole*; and the publick Place of *GOD*'s Worſhip from hence, is by *GOD* himſelf in *Scripture*, call'd, *The Houſe of Prayer?*

Quere VI. If *Religious Worſhip* is due only to *GOD*, and that upon the account of his *Infinite and Incommunicable Perfections*, are not all *Kinds* and *Degrees* alſo of *Religious Worſhip*, for the ſame reaſon, peculiar and due to *GOD alone*; unleſs there be ſome other *Being* beſides *GOD*, who has thoſe Infinite Attributes and Perfections? But if all *Kinds* and *Degrees* of Religious Worſhip be not due to *GOD alone*, I conſider that our *Saviour's* Anſwer to the *Devil*, in the 4 *Chapter*, and 10 *Verſe* of St. *Matthew*, had been very imperfect. For when the *Devil* would have been adored by him, to what purpoſe was that Anſwer of the *Holy Jeſus, It is written, the Lord thy God ſhalt thou adore, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve:* unleſs our *B. Saviour* had intended by it, and by uſing of thoſe two words, *adore and ſerve*, (which I am told in the Original *Greek*, ſignifie and comprehend the meaneſt and loweſt, as well as the higheſt kind and degree of Honour and Service) to include and appropriate all manner, parts, and degrees of *Religious Worſhip* to GOD? For who can imagine but that the *Devil* would have been content and very glad if our Saviour would but have worſhipp'd him in any kind, and with the moſt *inferiour* degree of Worſhip?

Quere VII. But beſides, *Reverend Fathers*, I farther enquire of you, that if our Bleſſed *Saviour* had not by this Anſwer of his to the *Devil*, alſo intended to exclude all the Worſhip of *good* as well as *bad* Spirits, whether 'tis not rational to think he would have anſwer'd the *Devil* thus, *The Lord thy God, and good Spirits ſhalt thou adore, and them only ſhalt thou ſerve?* And whether our Saviour's not mentioning of *good* Spirits, either *Angels* or *Saints*, or the *B. Virgin*, but on the contrary confining *Religious Worſhip* and Service to GOD *Only*, is not an unanſwerable Objection and Argument againſt our Worſhipping of *Saints and Angels together with GOD*, and ſo makes us guilty of *Idolatry?* For till you oblige me with a perfect *Definition of Idolatry*, and convince me of an Error, at preſent, I humbly conceive *Idolatry* does not conſiſt meerly in forſaking the Worſhip of the *Supreme GOD*, but alſo in Worſhipping any *Being* or thing elſe, together with the

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Supreme *GOD*, or while we continue to Worſhip the Supreme *GOD*. But if what I have now diſcours'd from this Anſwer of our *Saviour*, be not the true meaning, I beg you then, to give me the true ſence of it, and prove your Interpretation by *Vincentius Lirinenſis*'s Rule.

Quere VIII. If you ſay, as I hope for the Honour of *GOD*, and the Love of *Truth* you will, that all kinds, parts, and degrees of *Religious Worſhip* are due *only to GOD*, and that *Prayer or Religious Invocation* is a *part* of that *Worſhip*; then *Reverend Fathers*, I enquire of you, Whether 'tis not too plain that we *Catholicks* in our Religious *Invocation* of, and *Praying to the Saints and Angels*, are highly guilty of *Idolatry*, ſince the moſt excellent *Saint* or *Angel*, or even the *B. Virgin* herſelf, is but a *Creature*, and we give part of that Honour to it, which is due to *GOD* who created that Angel or Saint? And do not we likewiſe in *Invocating and Praying* to the *Saints and Angels*, attribute to them at leaſt, *Omniſcience or Omnipreſence*, or elſe what *ſuperlative* Nonſence is it to pray to them at all? What ſhall we anſwer to *GOD*, for thus robbing him of thoſe *Perfections peculiar to his infinite Eſſence*? And what will it avail us at the *Great Day*, to ſay, *Lord we gave but an inferior degree of Religious Worſhip to ſome of thy Creatures which we believ'd more excellent than others, and thy dear Friends:* when at the ſame time the *Angry and Jealous GOD* ſhall tell us, That he had plainly reveal'd to us, *that every part and degree of Religious Worſhip was due only to him, and that Prayer was a principal part of that Worſhip that was peculiar to him*? I ſay, *Reverend Fathers*, what will become of us, when we ſhall be charg'd with giving part of that Honour and Worſhip, tho' never ſo *inferiour*, and for *GOD*'s *ſake too*, to the *Creatures*, which was only due to *GOD* the *Creator*? This is a matter of vaſt conſequence, and therefore I humbly and earneſtly beg you to give me a full Anſwer, for my Mind and Conſcience is extreamly perplex'd about it. I have a great reſpect for the *Authority* of our *Church*, but I muſt needs tell you *Reverend Fathers*, that I begin to have a far greater regard to the *Authority* of *GOD*.

Quere IX. But *Reverend Fathers*, I muſt trouble you with more Enquiries into this Affair, for I look upon't to be of far greater concern than the generality of our People do. To deal freely with you, till I am much better ſatisfied about the lawfulneſs

fulneſs of it, I ſhall forbear offering up any *Prayers* either *Vocal* or *Mental*, to the greateſt and moſt glorious *Saint* or *Angel* in Heaven, or even to the *B. Virgin* herſelf: for doubtleſs, as ſlight as we make of the matter, yet a *right Object of Worſhip* is of infinite concern, and I am now fully convinc'd, not only, that this Article of *Invocation*, &c. is one of the moſt eſſential in *Religion*, but alſo that no leſs then our Eternal *Salvation* or *Damnation* depends on't; and therefore let no man think ſtrange that I ſhould ceaſe *Invocating Saints*, till I meet with ample ſatisfaction to my Doubts and Scruples. For I have learnt of St. *Paul*, *That all that is not of faith is ſin.* And of another *Spiritual Guide*, *That when a man's mind is in doubt, the ſafer part is to be choſen*: and in Religious Doubts, *that which is moſt for the Honour of GOD*; which at preſent, I am perſwaded, *praying* to, and depending upon him *alone* is. But I enquire, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether any *Creature* tho' never ſo excellent, whether it be *Angel* or *Saint*, or even the *B. Virgin* herſelf, has any *natural* and inherent Right, to any *kind* or *degree* of *Religious Worſhip*? If it has, I deſire you to make it out; if it has not, then I *enquire*, Whether to juſtifie a Practice of ſuch vaſt moment, we are not bound to ſhew an expreſs poſitive Law of *GOD*? And if there be ſuch an expreſs *Divine* Command, I beſeech you *Reverend Fathers*, for mine, and the quiet of other mens Conſciences in this weighty matter, to produce it. But if you can neither ſhew that the moſt excellent *Creature* imaginable, has a *natural Right*, nor an *expreſs Command from GOD*, for any kind or part of *Religious* Worſhip, then I further ask, How can our Church in *commanding*, and we in *giving Religious* Worſhip to Saints and Angels, be acquitted from groſs *Idolatry*? And how can the *Proteſtants* be guilty of the leaſt Sin, for refuſing, and not doing an Action for which there is neither a Law of *GOD* or *Nature*? But I further enquire *Reverend Fathers*, and ſuppoſing the *Proteſtants* are miſtaken, and are over nice and curious in refuſing to give any *Divine Worſhip* to *Angels and excellent Saints*, &c. Whether they are not in a much more innocent and pardonable condition, than we of the Church of *Rome*, ſince they do not give that *Religious* Worſhip to the *Angels and Saints*, which innocently they might have done, but were not bound to it by any Law of *GOD*, and refus'd to do it, not out of any contempt or diſreſpect to thoſe *excellent Spirits*, but purely through a mighty

mighty reverence to *GOD*, and fear of giving his *incommunicable* Glory to a *Creature*? But *Reverend Fathers*, I have a mighty dread upon me, that at the Great Day we ſhall have nothing to plead for our ſelves, in caſe we be miſtaken, in giving any degree of *Religious* Worſhip, tho' never ſo *ſmall*, to *Creatures*, which is *all* due only to the *Supreme GOD*? For tell me ſincerely, what can we offer in our excuſe? No *poſitive Law of GOD*, for that, I doubt, forbids all *Creature-Worſhip*; nor the Principles of Natural Reaſon, for a very ſmall meaſure of *Natural Light*, tells us, we cannot, and we ought not, *Religiouſly* to Worſhip any other *Being*, than that which guides us, and preſerves our *Being*?

Quere X. Though I have already, *Reverend Fathers*, in this Section, made ſome Enquiries concerning the Nature of that Worſhip which is due to *GOD only*, and that which is due to his Excellent *Creatures*; yet I cannot forbear enquiring further, upon my meeting ſince with what the *Catechiſm* of the Council of *Trent* ſays, in *p.* 344, concerning *the Worſhip and Invocation* of Saints, *viz.* 'That whereas we read that the Angels refus'd to be worſhipp'd 'by Men; it muſt be underſtood that they did ſo, becauſe they 'would not have that *Honour* done to them, which was due to *GOD* 'alone. For the Holy Spirit, who ſays Honour and Glory be to '*GOD Only*, the ſame has commanded to honour our *Parents* 'and *Elders*. Beſides Holy Men who Worſhipped one *GOD* '*only*, did adore Kings alſo, *i. e.* did humbly reverence them. Now here, *Reverend Fathers*, give me leave humbly to enquire of you, Whether that *Honour* which is due to *GOD alone*, and this Honour which we are commanded to give to our *Parents and Elders, and to Kings*, is of the ſame kind and nature, and differ only in *Degrees*? If it differs only in degrees, how many degrees are due to GOD *alone*, and how many to his excellent *Creatures*, ſuch as *Angels and Saints*, and where is this determin'd in Scripture, for that I muſt tell you, I take to be the only external Revelation of the Will of GOD? Or is the one of a quite different nature and kind from the other? And if they be, then pray, By what Names do ye diſtinguiſh them? By what Acts and Signs are they expreſs'd and known? I have yet heard but of two ſorts or kinds of *Worſhip and Honour*, &c. either *Religious and Divine*, or *Civil*. Now *Reverend Fathers*, I take *Religious and Civil Honour*, to be as different in their natures and kinds, as GOD and Men are; therefore I humbly enquire of

You, Which of these two sorts of Honour, does this *Trent-Catechism* say, The *Angels* refus'd, as not *theirs*, but *GOD's due only*? And what *Honour* was it that the *Angels* were willing to have receiv'd, was it *Religious* or *Civil*? And whatever Honour it was, can you prove from *Scripture*, that the same kind and degree of Honour is due to the *Saints* also? And is the same Honour, both kinds and degrees, which is due to *Angels and Saints*, also due to our *Parents, and Elders, and to Kings*? This *Catechism* in my opinion seems to say so. But to deal freely, the darkness and confusion I observe in this Book, about so important a matter, does not look well. I appeal to you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether it had not really been more fair and honest, intelligible, and instructive, when the Authors of this *Catechism* were treating of honouring *GOD*, the *Angels*, &c. plainly to have told us, what kind and degree of Honour was proper and due to *GOD*, what to the *Angels* and *Saints*, and what to our *Parents*, *Elders*, and *Kings*, and by what Words and Acts such Honour is to be express'd? But since they have not, I humbly beg it of you, and till I receive your Information, I shall conclude, that we are only to pay such an Honour to *Angels* and *Saints*, as we do to our *Parents*, &c. which I think we call *Civil*, and not *Religious* Honour, which I think consists in Love, Respect, *&c.* But was it ever heard that any body here in *England*, for example, and in their Senses, ever put up *formal and solemn Prayer*, either *Vocal* or *Mental*, in the *Church*, or in their *Closets*, to their *Parents*, *&c.* which might be in *China*, or *Virginia*, or but in *France*. I shall therefore, henceforward, pay a great degree of Love and Respect for the *B. Angels and Saints*, but I shall forbear *Religiously* to *Invoke*, or *Pray* to them: 1. Because they are but my *Fellow-Creatures*. And, 2. Because 'tis much more absurd and unreasonable to call upon them, then to call upon my *Parents* in a far Country, because their distance from me is suppos'd to be incomparably greater, and that I have no more assurance that they hear me, than I have that my *Parents* hear me, and so my Prayers are equally vain and impertinent.

Quære XI. But *Reverend Fathers*, Does not that place of the Prophet *David*, *Psal.* 65. *ver.* 2. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come*: and that other Text in the 10 Chapter of *Rom.* v. 14. *How then shall they invocate, in whom they have not believ'd*: very plainly prove these things: 1. That none but

GOD

GOD can hear our Prayers. And, 2. For that very reason all Mankind is directed to offer up their Prayers to him alone. 3. That we cannot, nor ought not to invocate, or pray to any *Being*, but what we *Believe in*? And do we use to say, that we *Believe in* any but *in GOD*? In the *Creed*, we say, I believe *in* GOD, *&c.* But who says, that knows what he says, *I Believe in the Arch-Angel St.* Michael, or *I Believe in St.* Peter, or *I Believe in the Virgin* Mary? If then we do not Believe in, *i. e.* put our hope, trust, and confidence in the Virgin *Mary*, or any other *Saints* which are but *Creatures*, as we do *Believe in GOD the Creator*, why should we invocate and pray unto them? What Sacriledge as well as Folly is this? But *Reverend Fathers*, if this be not the true meaning of these two Texts, I humbly enquire of you, what is the *Infallible* Sence of them, and how I may be *infallibly* certain that what you say is the Sence, is indeed so?

Quere XII. But *Reverend Fathers*, I am not ignorant that some of our Church argue that we ought to pray *to* Saints and Angels, because they pray *for* us. Now not to dispute with you about this consequence, let me only humbly ask you, Whether the *Jews* under the Law, either in their publick or private Worship pray'd to the *Angels*? Surely the Angels were in Heaven before as well as since the coming of our *Saviour*, and pray'd for Mankind too, and yet if you cannot prove that the *Jews* pray'd to, and invocated them, as we now do them, and the Blessed Saints; I beseech you, how does it follow, that because Angels and Saints pray *for* us men, that therefore we are to pray *to* them? But in good earnest, *Reverend Fathers*, Is not the true question in this matter, not whether those *Blessed Spirits* pray *for us*, but whether we are to pray *to them*? Now we say, that they are to be pray'd unto, but can we prove it, either from any Principles of *Natural* Reason, or any *positive* Divine Law of *GOD*? The *Protestants* say, they are not to be pray'd *unto*, and think they sufficiently prove what they say, when they produce not only an *express* Law of *GOD* deliver'd by *Moses* to the *Jews*, which forbids any other *Being* to be Worshipp'd but the *Supreme GOD*; but also our *Saviour's* Answer to the *Devil*, *That GOD only is to be adored, or worshipp'd, and serv'd*: as also from other places of Holy Scripture, that *Prayer* is an essential part of that Worship which is *peculiar to GOD*. So that, *Reverend Fathers*, if we cannot prove some of these things following, have not the *Protes-*

ſtants infinitly the better of us in this weighty matter? either, 1. That GOD gave no ſuch Law to the *Jews*: or, 2. That he has Repeal'd it: or, 3. That our *Saviour* when he told the Devil, that GOD *only was to be Worſhipp'd*; yet he meant that *Good* Spirits, but not *Evil*, were likewiſe to be Worſhipp'd *together with* GOD? So that I humbly ask, What ſignifies to any rational Man, that Argument of the Council of *Trent*, viz. *That it is good and profitable humbly to pray to the Saints*, unleſs we can ſhew plainly that GOD has commanded it? Is the Authority of a *Council*, tho' never ſo *General*, ſufficient to repeal an *expreſs* Law of GOD, which ſays, GOD *only is to be Worſhipp'd*.

Quere XIII. Beſides, *Reverend Fathers*, I obſerve, that when the Authors of the *Catechiſm* of the Council of *Trent*, p. 464. go about to prove *who is to be pray'd to*, and that GOD is to be pray'd to, they do it not only by *Scripture*, viz. *Pſal.* 49. 15. *Call upon me in the day of tribulation*, but affirm, That *the very Light of Nature implanted in the Souls of Men, teaches it.* But in the very next Section, when they come to treat of *Praying to Saints*, they only ſay, *We fly to the Aſſiſtance of the Saints that are in Heaven, to whom alſo that Prayers are to be made, has been held ſo certain in the Church of* GOD, *that to pious Men there can ariſe no doubt.* Now *Reverend Fathers*, I humbly enquire of you, that if either in this place, or in the 344 *p.* where they alſo treated of this matter, they could have produced any direct proofs, either from *Scripture* or the *Light of Nature*, is it imaginable that they would have omitted them here, and have contented themſelves with only ſaying, *That Prayers to Saints has been held ſo certain in the Church of* GOD, *that to pious Men there can be no doubt?* And whether this *ample* proof of theirs for *Prayer to* GOD, and their *no* proof for *Prayer to Saints*, is not a *loud* confeſſion of our *Church*, that we cannot prove *Invocation of Saints* lawful: eſpecially too, when a Man conſiders, that the very beſt proof and argument the *great Council of Trent* was able to produce was only this, *That it is good and profitable*: but not a word that it is either commanded by GOD, or dictated to us by the *Light of Nature*. Will not any man that believes it to be of vaſt moment, to have a right *Object* of Worſhip, conſider theſe things?

Quere XIV. When our *B. Lord* ſet us a pattern how to Pray, he directs us only to ſay, *Our Father*, &c. and to preſent our Petitions to GOD *alone*. Now if *Chriſt* would have had us pray

to

to *Saints and Angels* alſo, I humbly enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether ſo mean a thought can enter into any ſober Man's Head, as to think, that our *B. Saviour* would have conceal'd, or omitted *That*, or any thing elſe, in ſo important a matter as *Prayer*, which either had been our *Duty*, or had been but *good and profitable* to us in our way to Heaven? And whether our Lord's not having done this, *i. e.* not advis'd us to *pray to Saints and Angels*, as well as to *GOD*, is not a good *negative* Argument againſt our *Practice*?

Quere XV. Farther I enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether *GOD* intended by the coming of *Chriſt* to root *Idolatry* out of the World? If he did, as I hope you'll ſay he did, Whether 'tis poſſible for a *rational* Man to think, that as one *effectual means* to that *end*, our Saviour ever deſign'd to ſet up the *Religious Worſhip of Saints and Angels, and praying before Images and Pictures*? Can, I ſay, a rational man be of ſo *extravagant Faith*, as to believe that the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, who came to deſtroy all *Creature-Worſhip*, then ſo much practis'd in the *Heathen* World, intended to ſet up a new kind of *Creature and Image-Worſhip*, only rectifying Mens Notions and Opinions about it, and changing their *Country Gods* into *Heavenly Saints and Angels, and the B. Virgin*, and giving new Names to their *Statues and Images*? If a man, I ſay, can once bring himſelf to believe that our Saviour intended by this *means* to cure mens inclinations towards *Idolatry*, I deſire to know of you, *Reverend Fathers*, what can come amiſs to ſuch a Man's Faith?

Quere XVI. Again, *Reverend Fathers*, I read in the 344. *p.* of our *Trent* Catechiſm, that the *Holy Spirit ſays, Honour and Glory be to GOD only*. But pray then, How comes it to paſs, that many of our *Authors of Devotion* (and particularly a late one, that has ſet forth the *Contemplations on the Life and Glory of Holy Mary*, &c.) ſay, *Glory be to Jeſus and Mary*? Methinks, *Reverend Fathers*, this joyning the Bleſſed Virgin with the Holy *Jeſus* and Saviour of the World, and giving her *equal Praiſe, Honour, and Glory*, with GOD, at beſt, looks a little diſobedient to the *Holy Spirit*, and is very undecent. But if *Glory*, &c. *be due to GOD only*, as you own the *Holy Spirit* itſelf ſays, What bold *blaſphemous* Wretches are we then to give it to a *Creature*? And this Author, I obſerve, makes no difference between *Jeſus and Mary*, in his giving *Honour and Glory*, muſt not any one conclude then, that the

the ſame Honour and *Glory* is given to *Mary* as to *Jeſus*? The horrour of which makes me tremble.

Quere XVII. But further I enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether *Religious Praiſe*, as well as *Prayer*, is not an *eſſential* part of the *Worſhip of* GOD? And whether by it we poor *Creatures*, do not pay that *Homage* which is proper and due to the *Divine Majeſty only*? And whether this *Hymn* of *Glory be*, &c. has not from the very firſt Ages, always been us'd as a *peculiar Form* of giving *Praiſe, Honour, and Glory to* GOD, *and the Holy Trinity*? And if ſo, Whether by our ſaying, *Glory be to Jeſus and Mary*, we do not *equally* Worſhip *Her* with *Jeſus*? Give *equal Glory, and Honour, and Praiſe* to a *Creature*, as to GOD *the Almighty Creator*, and one of the Perſons of the *B. Trinity*? And whether this is not both downright *Sacriledge and Idolatry*?

Quere XVIII. But *Reverend Fathers*, upon a Friend of mine, (with whom I often confer about theſe matters, and who is as much diſſatisfied as myſelf) I ſay, upon his Engliſhing to me this *Verſicle*, in the *Office for the Feſtival of St.* Mar. ad Nives, *viz. Make me worthy to praiſe thee, O Holy Virgin*; and alſo out of the ſame *Office*, this *Prayer* or *Leſſon*, which is ſaid upon the *Second Day of the Octave of the Nativity of the B. Virgin*, viz. 'O *B. Mary*, 'who can ſufficiently give thee *Praiſe and Thanks*, who by thy 'ſingular aſſent, didſt ſuccour the World when it was undone? 'What *Praiſes* ſufficient can frail Mankind pay unto thee, who 'has found a way of recovery only by thy commerce with GOD? 'We therefore pray thee receive our *Thanksgivings*, how mean 'ſoever they be, and unequal to thy Merits. I ſay, I yet farther enquire of you, Whether *Religious Praiſe* has not always been counted the *Sacrifice* of a Chriſtian? And if *Sacrifice*, which the Biſhop of *Meaux* acknowledges to be a * *principal part of that interiour Adoration* which is due to GOD, *and cannot be offer'd to any but to him, becauſe by it we make a publick Acknowledgment, and a ſolemn Proteſtation of* GOD's *Soveraignty, and our abſolute dependance.* How can we, without being guilty of *Blaſphemy and Idolatry*, by *this Prayer*, and that Hymn before mention'd, *viz. Glory be to*, &c. (which by all other Chriſtians at leaſt, except us, was ever us'd as a *peculiar and appropriated Form of Praiſing* GOD *and the Holy Trinity*) offer up this *Sacrifice of Praiſe*, &c. to the *Virgin Mary*, who is confeſſedly but a *Creature*?

* Expoſition, Sect. 3. p. 4.

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But beſides, *Reverend Fathers*, Pray, How comes it to paſs that in this *Prayer* we attribute to the *Virgin Mary*, the *finding out the Recovery* of loſt Mankind? I profeſs, I always thought that we *Chriſtians* at leaſt, made the Holy *Trinity* the ſole *Contriver* of the *Redemption* and *Salvation* of Mankind. Is not ſo mighty a Work a little too big for a *Creature* to deviſe?

SECT. III.

Quere I. *Reverend Fathers*, as I am exceſſively *diſſatisfy'd* in my Conſcience about this *Invocation of the Virgin Mary, and other Saints*; ſo I cannot leave off making larger *Enquiries* into the matter; my next therefore ſhall be, Whether we *Catholicks* do not *exceed* the Bounds and Rules which the *Catechiſm* of the Council of *Trent* and other Books ſet out, or allow'd by our *Church*, does preſcribe us about *Praying to Saints*, &c. Now I humbly conceive the Truth in this matter will be beſt diſcover'd, Firſt by ſeeing how far *Authority* ſays we *may* go: and Secondly, how far we *do* actually go in this Practice. The *Catechiſm*, p. 464. ſays, *We do not pray to* GOD, *and to the Saints after the ſame manner. To God we pray, either to give us the good things we want, or to deliver us from evil: But to the Saints we pray, (becauſe they are in favour with* GOD*) to undertake our Patronage, and to beg of* GOD *thoſe things we want. Hence we have two ways of Praying differing in the manner; for we properly ſay to* GOD, Have mercy upon us, hear us; *but to the Saints*, Pray for us: and it adds, That *we muſt take heed, that what is proper to* GOD, *we give not to any beſides him.* And the Biſhop of *Meaux*, who by *ſome* of us is thought to have given the true *ſence* of our *Church*, in the *Advertiſement of his Expoſition*, p. 11. ſays, *That we pray to them with the ſame mind we pray to our Brethren, who are upon Earth with us, that is, to pray with us, and for us, to our Common Maſter, in the Name of our Common Mediator, who is Jeſus Chriſt.* And in his *Expoſition*, *Sect.* 4. he ſays, That *the Church teaches us to pray to the Saints in the ſame Spirit of Charity, and according to the ſame Order of Fraternal Society, which moves us to demand aſſiſtance of our Brethren living upon Earth.* And our *Repreſenter*, p. 4, 5. ſays, *That as almoſt every ſick Man deſires the Congregation to be his Mediators*, i. e. *to be remembred in their Prayers, ſo he deſires the Bleſſed in Heaven to be his Mediators, that is, that they would pray to* GOD *for him.*

And

And is not this, *Reverend Fathers*, and the utmoſt, that by our *Church* we are allow'd to do? Shall we now ſee whether, neither many of our *Paſtors* and *Guides* Teach, nor our *People* and *Church* itſelf *Practice*, a great deal more in their *Devotions* to the *Saints*, and principally to the *B. Virgin*? And will not this be beſt known by our *Publick Offices*, and other *allow'd Books of Devotion*?

I begin then with the *Offices* of our *Church*, which I hope will be allow'd of as an Authentick Proof: for if *they* may not be admitted to prove our *Worſhip* and *Practice*, I know not how it can be done, but by being preſent with every individual Man when he is at his Prayers and Devotion, which I humbly conceive is next to impoſſible.

In the *Office* then, of St. *Mar. ad Nives*, in the Second Day of the Octave of her Nativity, my aforeſaid *Friend* Engliſh'd to me this *Expreſſion*, out of the *Leſſon* or *Prayer* to the B. Virgin, *O, admit our Prayers within the Sanctuary of thy Audience.*

And out of the *Offic. Parv. B. Mariæ*, this Prayer of our Church to her, *We fly unto thy Protection and Safe-guard, O Holy Mother of GOD, deſpiſe not our Prayers in our Neceſſities, but always deliver us from all dangers, O Glorious and B. Virgin.*

Likewiſe out of the *Office B. M. in Sabbato*, &c. and the *Hymn* which begins *Ave Maris Stella*, this Prayer; *Hail Star of the World*, &c.——*Looſe the Bonds of guilty Sinners, enlighten the eyes of the Blind, drive away all Sins from us, make us humble and chaſt, and free from the Bonds of our Sins; give us purity of Life, and grant us a ſafe paſſage into the next World.*

And in the aforeſaid *Office*, *Parv. B. M.* this Prayer, *Protect us from the Enemy, and receive us at the hour of Death.*

Likewiſe out of the *Brev. Rom.* he Engliſh'd to me this *Leſſon or Prayer* to the *B. Virgin, Accept that we offer, give that we ask, and pardon that we fear, becauſe thou art the* Only *hope of Sinners. We hope for the pardon of our Sins by thee, and in thee is the moſt bleſſed expectation of our Reward.*

And in the *proper Maß of her Seven Sorrows*, and the Solemn *Hymn*, which begins, *Stabat Mater doloroſa*, this other ſtrange Prayer, *Make our Hearts to burn with the Love of Chriſt,*——*Defend us in the Day of Judgment*——*And grant that when our Souls depart from our Bodies, they may go into the Glory of Paradice.* By my Friend's help, I could have produced ſeveral other Pray-

ers,

ers and Expreſſions to the B. V. and other Saints, in as high ſtrains as theſe, but I ſuppoſe theſe may ſuffice for my purpoſe. Let me now, *Reverend Fathers*, ſee what ſome of our *eminent* and allow'd of *Writers* and *Guides* teach our People.

I begin with Cardinal *Bonaventure*, and who is alſo a *Canoniz'd Saint*: Out of the Office he has compos'd, call'd *Corona B. V.* the *Crown* of the B. Virgin, which is found in his Sixth Tome, and the Edition of *Rome*, 1588, my Friend Engliſh'd to me this *Orizon*; *O Empreſs, and our moſt kind Lady, by the Authority of a Mother*, Command *thy moſt beloved Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he would vouchſafe to lift up our minds*, &c. And in his 35 *Pſalm* of his *Lady's Pſalter*, he hath theſe Words; *Incline the Countenance of GOD upon us*, Compel *him to have Mercy upon us Sinners.*

The next I ſhall produce, is a *Little Book*, which I have by me, and which till of late, that my *Underſtanding* is a little better inform'd, I conſtantly us'd, it is call'd, *The Pſalter of the B. Virgin*; it was Compos'd firſt in *French*, by a Father of your *Society*, and after, in the Year 1624, *Tranſlated* into *Engliſh*, and Printed with Allowance, the *Tranſlator* aſſures the Lady to whom he Dedicated it, that it was well approv'd of by the better ſort of *Catholicks*, and was preſented to one of the greateſt *Queens* in *Europe*, in the *French* Tongue. In the *Firſt Petition* there are theſe Expreſſions, 'O Glorious Virgin, grant me *Grace*, that I may receive pardon 'for my Sins.—I have this only Refuge, to caſt myſelf under the 'Shadow of your Wings.—Give my Soul entrance into Para-'dice, when it ſhall leave the Body,———And let all that is 'due unto me for my Sins, be cancell'd by your *Merits*——— 'Let the greatneſs of your *Mercy*, blot out the multitude of 'mine Offences, ſupplying by your *Merits*, what in Juſtice I 'dare not *demand*. Turn not your Face away from me, for I 'put my *Truſt* in you. I will humble my heart before you, for 'I know that the Proud ſhall not be entertain'd near unto your 'Sacred *Majeſty*. In the *Second Petition* theſe, 'As ſoon as you 'extend *your Hand* upon the Sick, they are healed, and the 'Waves of this troubleſome World are ſoon appeas'd by *your* 'Commandment———Receive my Soul into your Hands, when 'it ſhall leave this mortal Body, and take it into your Protecti-'on, for it will be loſt with fear, and will not know to what 'ſide to turn, to ſave itſelf, unleſs under the ſhadow of *your Mercy*.

And in the *Third Petition*, to omit the reſt, there are theſe Words, 'O Bleſſed Virgin, *Mother of Unlimited Power*, ador'd 'and call'd upon by the Univerſe, give me ſtrength to reſiſt the 'Temptations of my inviſible Enemies,——If you ſhould have 'forſaken me, to whom ſhould I have then repair'd, that would 'have lookt upon me with pity and compaſſion?

My Friend alſo Engliſh'd to me, the other-day, out of Cardinal *Bona's Horolog. Aſcet.* or *Monaſtick Clock*, ſome Expreſſions of the ſame nature. This Cardinal, I am told, either is now alive, or but lately dead, and is an approv'd Writer, as well as of eminent Place and Dignity in our Church. In this Piece of his, he thus addreſſes himſelf to the Virgin *Mary:* And who can doubt that he would have all others do ſo too? 'Protect me, 'O ſweeteſt Virgin *Mary*, under the ſhadow of thy Wings. 'What can I do without thee, O Bleſſed Virgin, or what 'would become of me, if thou ſhouldſt turn away thy Face 'from me? I had rather undergo the Pains of *Hell*, than that 'thy Glory and Dignity ſhould be the leaſt diminiſh'd for a 'moment of time. Let all that know thy Name, truſt in thee, 'O Glorious Virgin, becauſe thou doſt not forſake thoſe that 'truſt in thee. Let the Light of thy Countenance appear unto 'me in my Agony; and let thy Comfort (moſt merciful Mo-'ther) make glad my departing Soul.

The laſt *Book* I ſhall make uſe of in this matter, is one I have already in my Sixteenth Enquiry of the Second *Section* mention'd, *viz. Contemplations on the Life and Glory of Holy Mary*, &c. By *J. C. D. D.* Licens'd by your Society, and Printed in our own Tongue, in the Year 1685.

In the *Epiſtle Dedicatory*, the Author teaches, That the B. Virgin *is not only Empreſs of Seraphims*, &c.——*The moſt exact Original of Practical Perfection, which the Omnipotence of* GOD *ever drew; but that by innumerable Titles, ſhe claims the* Utmoſt *Duty of every Chriſtian, as a proper Homage to her Greatneſs.* And in the Book, *p.* 7. he ſays, That *whatever Gifts are beſtow'd upon us by Jeſus, we receive them by the Mediation of* Mary.——*That 'tis one great Mark of the Predeſtination of the Elect, to be ſingularly Devoted to* Mary.——*Nor hath any one Petition'd* Mary, *who was refus'd by* Jeſus, *or truſted in* Mary, *and was abandon'd by* Jeſus. And *p.* 12, 13, 14. *That we muſt chuſe her to be our Adoptive Mother, Patroneſs, and Advocate, and intruſt her with whatever*

we

we are, have, do, or hope, in Life, Death, and through all Eternity. That we are in the Preſence of Holy Mary, *and that ſhe ever ſurveys the preſent ſtate of our Souls, all our Thoughts and Projects, and every tract of our Converſation, and therefore that we muſt put our ſelves wholly under her Protection.* And *p.* 22. in the *Reſolution*, he teaches us to *reſolve* thus: *I will obſerve thee as my Soveraign Lady, Adoptive Mother, and moſt powerful Patroneſs, relying on thy Bowels of Mercy, in all my Wants, Petitions, and Tribulations of Body and Mind.* And then immediately follows *The Praiſe*, as he calls it, in this manner, Hail *Mary*, &c.

Verſ. *Open my Lips, O Mother of* Jeſus;
Reſp. *And my Soul ſhall ſpeak forth thy Praiſe.*
Verſ. *Divine Lady, be intent to my aid;*
Reſp. *Graciouſly make haſt to help me.*
Verſ. *Glory be to* Jeſus *and* Mary.
Reſp. *As it was, is, and ever ſhall be.*

I could, *Reverend Fathers*, have been a great deal larger in my Quotations, not only from theſe *Offices and Books of Devotion*, I have now mention'd, but alſo from divers others, as *Bernardine de Buſti in Mariali*, Cardinal *Bonaventure*'s Works, to wit, St. *Athanaſius*'s *Creed*, the *Litany*, the *Benedicite*, the *Benedictus*, and the other *Hymns* of *Holy Scripture*, and alſo the *Te Deum*, all turn'd and apply'd (as I am told) by this *Cardinal*, to the magnifying of the Power and Goodneſs of the *Virgin Mary*; to which I could alſo have added, a preſent *French* Author of your *Society*, one Father *Craſſet*, his *Veritable Devotion envers la Sainte Vierge*, &c. with ſeveral others; but I fear'd this would not only ſwell my *Letter*, beyond its intended bounds, but prove tedious to my *Readers*: let this then, if you pleaſe, ſuffice. And now, *Reverend Fathers*, will you ſuffer me to review this Query from the beginning, and upon the whole matter to ask you ſome ſerious and important Queſtions, which naturally, and neceſſarily offer themſelves?

And firſt, Whether the *good Things we want*, and *the Evil we would be deliver'd from*, be not the very *Matter* of our *Prayers*? And if they be, Whether it was fairly done of the Authors of the *Trent-Catechiſm*, to call them only the *Manner*? ſince even common Sence tells a Man, that *Good and Evil* are the very *Matter*, the things

of our *Prayers*, and not the *manner* of asking them. 2. Whether the *Caveat* which they gave, *To take heed that what is proper to GOD, we give not to any beſides him*, is not enough to convince any conſidering Man, not only that our Practice of *invocating the Saints* is extream full of Danger for the ignorant People, but alſo that they very well knew it too? And, 3. Since 'tis apparent, that they were ſenſible, that very eaſily the ignorant People might give *that to the Saints, which was proper to GOD*, Whether they had not acted more like *Chriſtian* Fathers of the *Church*, and Lovers of Souls, if either they had told men plainly, ſo that it had been next to impoſſible to miſtake, what was *due to GOD*, and what to the *Saints*? or elſe abſolutely to have forbidden *Praying* at all to *Saints*, (unleſs they could have made it appear, either by the Law of *Nature*, or by ſome *poſitive* Law of *GOD*, that it is a Duty commanded, which in my Thirteenth *Quere* of the Second *Section*, I have ſhew'd they never pretended to) and honeſtly have declar'd to Men, That it was both *wiſeſt and ſafeſt for them*, and moſt for the *Honour of GOD*, to put up their *Prayers* to him only, through the alone Merits, Mediation, and Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt our dear and only Saviour and Redeemer? 4. Whether in your Conſcience you do believe, and by ſound Arguments can prove, that the *People* who are naturally prone to *Superſtition and Idolatry*, had not been, I will not ſay only abundantly more, but abſolutely ſafe from all danger of falling into thoſe grievous Sins, if only they had been taught, and enjoin'd, to offer up their *Prayers* and *Praiſes to GOD alone*, through Jeſus Chriſt? And whether through the contrary *Doctrine* and *Practice* of Praying to the *Virgin Mary*, and other *Saints*, as well as to *GOD and our Saviour*, you do not believe many thouſands in our Communion, either through groſs *Ignorance*, ſome fond *Opinions*, or an exceſſive and *extravagant Devotion*, are not hugely guilty of *Superſtition and Idolatry*? And whether in plain *Engliſh*, this is not laying *Snares*, and digging *Pits* for human Souls?

5. Whether theſe Paſſages and Expreſſions which I have cited out of our *Offices*, *Breviaries*, and other *allow'd* Books of *Devotion*, do not abundantly prove that we *Catholicks* do horribly exceed the *Bounds and Rules* which the *Catechiſm*, the Biſhop of *Meaux*, and our *Repreſenter*, ſet us about *Praying to Saints*, &c. And in good earneſt, *Reverend Fathers*, Is it not manifeſt that we

we addreſs our ſelves to the *B. Virgin* in the ſame *manner and words*, as unto GOD, and *directly* ask of her, thoſe *Gifts and Graces, Good Things*, and *Spiritual* Bleſſings, which none but GOD can give? Do now we expreſs as much *truſt, hope, and confidence* in her, as is poſſible for Men by Words to expreſs to GOD, and our B. Saviour? Would not the very ſame words, which are here us'd to her, ſerve to ſignifie the greateſt *fear, awe*, and *reverence*, and to offer up the greateſt and moſt *paſſionate Deſires* of our Souls to GOD, and our dear *Saviour*, only changing *Lady* into *Lord, Mother* into *Father*, and *moſt eſt, bleſſed, glorious Virgin*, into *ſweeteſt, bleſſed, and glorious* GOD, *and Saviour*? And is this in good truth no more than a *manner* of Praying? Do men upon Earth thus pray for one another, or deſire others to pray for them? And is it no more than to ſay, *Pray for us*? What Wit of Man, and without doing open violence to the plain and natural ſenſe of Words, is able to reconcile our *Church* to herſelf, or theſe *Prayers* to this Form, *Pray for us*? And is there not here downright ſaying, *Have mercy upon us, hear us*? And is not this giving to the *Saints* what is proper to GOD? What man in his *Senſes* ever pray'd in this manner to his *abſent, or preſent Friends, or Brethren upon Earth*? What *ſick Man*, that was not alſo abſolutely *Diſtracted* ever thus deſir'd, either his *Friend*, or the *Congregation* to pray for him? Or whoever yet pray'd to his *Friend*, or his *Brethren*, or to any *Congregation* upon Earth, thus, 'O Sacred Majeſty and Soveraign Lord, of *Unlimited* 'Power, *Moſt* merciful Brother, &c. and the *Only* hope of Sin'ners, admit me into the *Sanctuary* of your Audience. I fly 'unto your Protection, for I have this *Only* Refuge, to caſt my 'ſelf under the ſhadow of your Wings; I rely on the Bowels 'of your *Mercy* in *all* my Wants, Petitions, and Tribulations of 'Body and Mind; deſpiſe not my Prayers in my Neceſſities, 'but deliver me from *all Dangers*. Grant me *Grace*, that I may 'receive pardon for my Sins; drive away all Sins from me; 'make me *humble* and *chaſt*, and give me purity of Life; make 'my Heart to burn with Love to Chriſt; let all that is due 'unto me for my Sins, be cancell'd by your *Merits*; let the 'greatneſs of your *Mercy* blot out the multitude of mine Of'fences; turn not away your face from me, for my truſt is in 'you. What can I do without you? Or what would become 'of me if you ſhould turn away your face from me? If you

ſhould

ſhould have forſaken me, to whom ſhould I then have repair'd, that would have looke upon me with pity and compaſſion? O, our moſt kind *Brother*, *Command*, *Compel* GOD to have Mercy upon me a Sinner; protect me from the Enemy, receive me at the hour of Death; give me a ſafe paſſage into the next World; receive my Soul into your hands, when it ſhall leave this Mortal Body; take it into your Protection, and give it entrance into Paradiſe and defend me in the Day of Judgment.

℣. *Open my Lips*, O *dear* Friend, *&c.*

℟. *And my Soul ſhall ſpeak forth thy Praiſe.*

℣. Divine Friend, *&c. be intent to my Aid*;

℟. *Graciouſly make haſt to help me.*

℣. *Glory be to* Jeſus *and my* Friend, *&c.*

℟. *As it was, is, and ever ſhall be.*

Now *Reverend Fathers*, deal plainly with me, Does not this ſort of Prayer, thus offer'd to a *Creature*, make even *You* tremble with horror? And yet it is every word taken out of theſe *Prayers*, and *Books* I have but juſt now quoted? Tell me then ſincerely, I beſeech you, Was ever ſuch a *Prayer* made by any Perſon well or *ſick*, that was in his Senſes, either to his *Friend*, his *Brethren*, or any *Congregation* upon Earth? Or is ſuch a Prayer fit to be made to any of them? Nay, I ask, Is ſuch a *Prayer* fit to be made to any *Saint* or *Angel*, or to the *B. Virgin* herſelf? Nay farther, Ought we, or is it poſſible, for us to Addreſs our ſelves to *GOD*, and our *B. Saviour*, in any *Manner* or *Words*, more ſuitable to that *Soveraign Being*, and our dependance on him? And laſtly, What greater things can be ſaid to the Eternal and ever Bleſſed *Trinity*? With what face then do we maintain againſt the *Proteſtants*, that we do not Pray to the *Saints* as unto *GOD*, nor ask thoſe things of them, which ought only to be ask'd of *GOD*, and our *Saviour*, becauſe they only can give them? And that we only pray to them, as one Friend deſires another upon Earth. And with what Juſtice do we of late complain of them, for charging us with theſe *Practices*, and would make the *World* believe that they *Miſrepreſent* us? When it is plain, that we are highly guilty of them, and are our ſelves indeed the very *Miſrepreſenters*? For the Love of *GOD*, our own and our Neighbours *Souls*, Why ſhould

we

we any longer *palliate and disguise* the matter, or by any means defend a *Worship*, for which we can shew no Law of GOD, or *Nature*, and which by our own confession is very apt to betray Men into these heinous Sins of *Superstition and Idolatry*? Why should we, *Reverend Fathers*, any longer wrong our own Consciences, and deceive the World, in so important a matter, meerly to support the *vile Worldly Interest* and Honour of a *Church*, that's afraid to confess herself in an Error, Because for *base ends*, she once assum'd the Title of *Infallible*? Without dissembling, *Reverend Fathers*, would it not be more for the *Honour* of our *Church*, and the *good and security* of *Souls*, not only to condemn and lay aside these, but *all Prayers* whatever to *Saints* and *Angels*, and ingenuously confess, that in this particular however, we have been in an *Error*, and the *Reformed* in the *right*? And that it is abundantly *sufficient* for *Salvation* to pray to GOD *alone*, through the *Merits*, *Mediation*, and Intercession only of *Jesus Christ* our Blessed *Redeemer*, because GOD has commanded no more? And if neither our *Church*, nor you for her, will acknowledge an *Error* in so plain a matter, and of such vast concern, must not we needs be thought People of a *monstrous* Courage, to trust our own Souls, and the Souls of our Children in such a *Church*, and in the hands of such *Guides*? Again, *Reverend Fathers*, What signifies it with the Bishop of *Meaux*, *in the Fourth Section of his Exposition*, to say, *That in what Terms soever those Prayers which we Address to Saints, are couch'd, it is the* Intention *of the Church, and of her Faithful, to reduce them always to this form, Pray for us*? Can the *Intention of the Church, and of her Faithful*, alter the nature of things, and the universal meaning of plain words? or is any such declaration of *Intention* to be admitted against the *plain, literal, and grammatical* Sence of the Prayers? But if the Sence and *Intention* of the Church, be no more, than to *Pray for us*, then why are not the *Prayers and Hymns* in our *Publick Offices*, *Breviaries*, &c. at least, alter'd to the Sence and *Intention* of our Church? And why are any other *Books of Devotion* suffer'd to come out, contrary to the Sence and *Intention* of the Church? What a ridiculous proceeding, to say no worse of it, is this of our *Church*, both to compose and set out *Prayers to the Saints* herself, and also permit others to do so too, *couch'd* and express'd in such *Words*, *Titles*, and *Phrases*, as all sensible Mankind make use of

to

to express their Thoughts and Desires in their Prayers to GOD, and the Holy Trinity, and then cry out, *That in what terms soever these Prayers which we make to the Saints, are couch'd, it is the Intention of the Church*, &c. Is the *Latin* Tongue, or any *Vulgar* Language so barren of *Words*, that when our Church would *invocate the Saints and Angels*, &c. she can do it in no other *manner*, *words*, or *terms*, than such in which she constantly and *properly* addresses her self to GOD, and the *Holy Trinity*? Are there not in every Language, and particularly in ours, *apt and proper* words and terms in which to express our Souls to GOD and the *Holy Trinity*? And likewise when we would desire the *Saints and Angels to Pray for us*? What folly as well as wickedness is it then to confound these *Objects* so infinitly different, in the same *terms* and *words*, and to use those to the *Saints and Angels*, which are proper to GOD only? Again, *Reverend Fathers*, Do not Men generally understand words as they sound and usually signifie? And does not the very natural sence of words, raise proper and suitable *Ideas* in Mens minds? Now I would fain know of you, *Reverend Fathers*, What Thoughts or *Ideas* a Man can be suppos'd to have, who after this *manner*, and for these things, thus addresses himself to the *Virgin Mary*?

'Sacred Majesty, Mother of *Unlimited* Power, the *only* hope 'of Sinners, ador'd and call'd upon by the whole Universe, 'and who by innumerable Titles claim the *Utmost* Duty of e'very Christian, as a *Proper Homage* to your Greatness. Let 'the greatness of your *Mercy* blot out the multitude of mine 'Offences, and deliver me from all Dangers. I entrust you 'with whatever I am, have, do, or hope in Life and Death, 'and through all Eternity. I own my self in your Presence, 'and that you survey the present state of my Soul, all my 'Thoughts and Projects, and every tract of my Conversation, 'and therefore I put my self wholly under your Protection, 'and will observe you as my *Sovereign* Lady, relying on your 'Bowels of Mercy in all my Wants of Body and Mind. Pro'tect me from the Enemy, and when my Soul departs from 'my Body, receive it into the Glory of Paradice, &c. Now do ye think, *Reverend Fathers*, that Invocating the *Virgin Mary* in such words as these, would not make any Men and Women very apt to entertain such an Idea of her as is only fit and

proper

proper to be thought of GOD? Would not the continual use of such a Prayer, make a man insensibly to forget, especially in the act and heat of Devotion, that she is but a Creature? and fancy that he is a praying to some *Being* of *Divine Excellency and Perfections*? Would not the *interior Sentiments* of his Mind think ye, grow like his *exterior Words and Expressions*, when in any Publick Place of Divine Worship, or but in his Closet, he is upon his *Knees with Hands and Eyes lifted up*, and in a perfect posture of *Adoration*? But if such a Man should not insensibly, by the meer force of using such Words and Expressions, fall into the thoughts of her being a GOD, and so be guilty of *flat Idolatry*; yet can you deny, that he is upon the very brink of that Danger? And must it not be esteem'd a *Miracle*, if such a Person is preserv'd from falling into that Precipice?

Quere II. But, *Reverend Fathers*, I am not ignorant that our *Disputers* think they sufficiently clear their hands of such Writers, as the Author of the *Contemplation*, &c. Father *Crasset*, Cardinals *Bona and Bonaventure*, *Bernardin de Busts*, &c. by saying that such things as they teach, and such *Prayers* and Expressions, as they compose and publish, are not the *Doctrines and Practices* of our Church, but the *extravagant Sayings and Flights of Devotion of some particular Men*. Now that this *Plea* has no place, and is of no force against such Prayers as are found in the *Offices*, *Breviaries*, *Missals*, &c. of our *Church*, I humbly conceive you'll easily grant, and therefore all such *Prayers*, and that *strange* Language and Expressions found in them, must unavoidably be charg'd upon our *Church*. But then concerning these others, I humbly enquire, Why the *Church* (if your *Order*, *Reverend Fathers*, be a part of the *Church*) allows and permits such, in particular, the *Contemplations*, &c. and *Father Crasset's Book*? and the same I might ask concerning the other Authors I have but now nam'd, for I am told they are all publish'd by the Authority of the Church, or by the *permission* of those appointed by the *Church*. And does not such permission amount to the Churches *approbation*? And does the Church use to approve of any thing, that is not the Doctrine of the *Church*? And if it be the Doctrine of our Church, Why do ye not speak out, and declare so, and prove it to be the Doctrine of *Christ* and his

Apostles? But if you still deny it to be the *Doctrine* of our *Church*, then pray, Why are not the Books call'd in, censur'd, and forbid to be read, and the Men who writ them punish'd for *False Teachers*, and *Deceivers*? Again, *Reverend Fathers*, if such be not the Doctrine of our Church, as I would now fain hope, for a very material reason, if it is not, then pray *Reverend Fathers*, let me humbly ask you again, Why are these Books let alone to deceive our poor *ignorant People* into such gross Errors? And here also it will be pertinent to *enquire* of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Why such *Books* as corrupt the Doctrines of *Repentance*, and destroy the necessity of a Holy Life, *speaking Truth*, and *doing Justice*, and in a word, all the *Moral* Duties and Practice of a *Christian*, are permitted to walk freely and boldly abroad in the *World*, and debauch Mens Principles and Practices? Why are they not, I say, call'd in, or forbid, or the Doctrines by the highest *Authority* condemn'd, and the *Authors*, who are alive, severely punish'd? A Collection of these Doctrines, I am told, is made by one, or more of the Doctors of *Sorbonne*, (who are esteem'd by most wise and good Men, as *Orthodox Catholicks* as any) and is Entituled, *The Morals of your Society*. Now, *Reverend Fathers*, to a Man that is never so little touch'd with the *true Spirit of a Christian*, must it not needs be a sad consideration, to think how many poor ignorant People in our Communion, fall into the misery of such *Guides*? And ought not this to make all us *Catholicks*, very careful and cautious about the choice of our *Spiritual Guides* and *Ghostly Fathers*, since it seems there are so many in our *Church*, that if we follow'd them, would lead us into such pernicious and damnable Errors? And here upon this consideration, I cannot omit, in this place, enquiring of you, and I humbly beg you to give me a particular answer to it. What signifies it to us ignorant *Lay* People, whether the *Pope* or a *General* Council, or *both* together be *Infallible*, if the Parish *Priest*, *Fryar*, or *Jesuit*, who has the management of our Souls, be not Infallible also? For since he is our *immediate* Teacher, and not the General *Council*, nor the *Pope*, is it not plain, that if he should be either a *Fool* or a *Knave*, he may either through *ignorance*, or to serve some *carnal* and worldly Interest, lead us into damnable Errors? I could be much larger in my Thoughts on

on this Enquiry; but I consider that I may have a fitter occasion for it, and therefore shall make no further digression.

Quere III. But, *Reverend Fathers*, I must needs yet be plainer with you, and tell you, That whether such things as Cardinal *Bonaventure*, and others have taught about the *Virgin Mary*, be, or be not the Doctrine of our Church, I am nevertheless infinitely disturb'd in my mind. If what *Bonaventure* has writ be not the Doctrine of our *Church*, then I am infinitely scandaliz'd that our Church should *Canonize* for a *Saint*, a Person guilty of such horrid and blasphemous Doctrine. And then again, suppose you could satisfie me (which I fear you cannot) that our Church has actually condemn'd these Books and Writings of his, and others, yet certainly, is it not a most dangerous thing to be in our *Communion*, where such *Spiritual Guides* are so frequent? *Lord!* say I to myself, what a deal of mischief may they do, and how many Souls may they poyson and ruin eternally, before their damnable *Errors* and pernicious Doctrines are discover'd and condemn'd? Whatever you may think on't, *Reverend Fathers*, I do profess that I am deeply sensible, that we *Catholicks* run a desperate hazard in the choice and use of our *Spiritual Guides*. And does not this frequency of *False Teachers* among us, make it highly reasonable and necessary, that we People should have the *liberty to examine* their Doctrines, whether true or false? And if we must examine them, as I do not see but we are bound, unless you can prove, that we must *blindly* follow our *Guides*, then I desire to know of you, By what *Rule*, and by what *Means* and *Faculties*? Surely, there is not only some certain *Rule*, but some certain *means* to use that *Rule* by in our Church, for us *Lay* People, or else to what purpose is the *liberty* you give us of *examining and trying your Doctrines*? But I fancy I may have room to make a particular *Enquiry* concerning this matter, and therefore shall step no farther from my present subject.

Quere IV. But, *Reverend Fathers*, the two words *Command*, and *Compel*, which our *Cardinal*, and *Saint Bonaventure* us'd in his *Orizon* to the Virgin *Mary*, and quoted in the First Query of this Section, are so excessive harsh and horrid, that

I could not forbear enquiring of you, Whether these Words do not, with a witness, *elevate the Virgin* Mary Exposition, *above the condition of a Creature*, which yet the Bi- Sect. 14. p. 7. shop of *Meaux* is so *modest* to say our Church does not? And does it not only make her *equal*, but also, set her infinitly above *GOD* her *Creator*? Unless that Person who *Commands*, and *Compels*, be *inferior* to the Person *Commanded*, and *Compell'd*?

Quere V. If I mistake not, *Reverend Fathers*, we account the *Rosary* a Special Piece of Devotion, and great things are said of its *Efficacy*, by many of our *Eminent* Writers, and Guides in Devotion. Now I will not at present enquire into these things, nor into the great *Mysteries* said to be in it, but will only humbly ask you, 1. What Antiquity, or what Reason can you shew, for turning the *Angel's Salutation of the Virgin Mary*, into a *direct Prayer* to her? Did the Angel *Gabriel* say, *Holy Mother of GOD, pray for us Sinners, now, and in the Hour of Death*; if the Angel did not, How comes it to be *pertinent* for us to do it? But, 2. What is the true reason, that in the *Rosary* we are to say Ten *Ave Maries*, to One *Pater Noster*? I have often askt this Question of some of our Priests, but could never get a satisfactory Answer. Now if in this matter I had Courage enough to follow my *Reason*, I profess, I think, I should say *Ten Pater Noster's*, *to One Ave Marie*. For seriously, *Reverend Fathers*, has not *GOD* given us incomparably far greater Evidence both of his *Love* and *Power*, than ever the Virgin *Mary* did? 3. Why do our *Preachers* immediately before their *Sermons*, say an *Ave Marie*? Why do they address themselves to the Virgin *Mary* upon that occasion? Is she the Fountain and Giver of all *good and perfect Gifts*? Does Wisdom and Eloquence come from her? Would it not, think ye, be far more decent and reasonable to address to *GOD*, or to the *Holy Ghost*, at such a time? But after all, What *Reason* or *Antiquity* can you produce for this strange *Practice*?

Quere VI. Can you, *Reverend Fathers*, prove by *Vincentius Lirinensis's* Rule, that departed *Souls* do enjoy Beatifical Vision before the Day of Judgment? If you can, I humbly beg you would do it. As also, that the *Saints* departed do certainly hear our Prayers. You perceive well enough, I doubt not

not, why I make this *Enquiry*. For if the departed *Saints* neither enjoy *Beatifical Vision*, nor *hear* our Prayers, Is it not yet more absurd for us to pray to them?

Quere VII. I think that we assert, that all *Certainty* in Matters of *Religion* must be *Infallible*, or else it is nothing worth, because we can never rely upon it. Now, pray, *Reverend Fathers*, What *Infallible Assurance* have we *Catholicks*, that all those who are *Canoniz'd Saints* by his *Holiness*, are indeed *Saints*, and in *Heaven*? If we have not *Infallible Assurance*, what reason have we Religiously to *Invocate* them?

Quere VIII. Our *Representer*, p. 4. distinguishes between *Mediators* of *Redemption*, and *Mediators* of *Intercession*; of this last, he says, *He does not at all doubt, but 'tis acceptable with GOD we should have many.* Now here I humbly enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, From whom he learnt this *Distinction*? From *GOD*, or from Man? if from *GOD*, Should he not prove it from *Scripture*? And how can he do it, since it is there so plainly reveal'd, that *GOD* hath appointed the *Mediator* of *Redemption*, to be also our *Mediator* of *Intercession*, and that his *Intercession* is grounded upon his *Redemption*: thus *Hebrews*, chap. 7. ver. 25. *Whereby he is able to save also for ever, them that go by himself to God, always living to make intercession for us*: and 1 *Tim.* chap. 2. ver. 5, 6. *For there is one God, one also mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a redemption for all.* Now, *Reverend Fathers*, Can you shew me such another Text for the *Saints* being our *Mediators* of *Intercession*? But if you say this Distinction is from Man, then I desire to know, How any Man, or all the Men upon Earth, came by such an Authority, as to appoint any *Mediators* with *GOD*, besides himself? And lastly, *Reverend Fathers*, Can you shew from *Universal Antiquity*, that the *Saints* departed, are by *GOD*, appointed *Mediators* of *Intercession*, as well as the Man *Christ Jesus*? If you can, I desire you to do it.

Quere IX. Pray, *Reverend Fathers*, upon what Ground or Authority does our Church distribute the *Patronage* of particular *Countries*, the *Cure* of several *Diseases*, and the *Protection* of all distinct *Professions* of Men, and all kinds of Creatures to particular *Saints*?

Quere X. Why, *Reverend Fathers*, are there in *Catholick* Coun-

Countries, as *Italy*, *Spain*, and *France*, more *Churches* built, more *Altars* erected, more *Presents* made, and more Cost bestow'd, more *Prayers* pour'd out, and *Vows* made, and *Offices* perform'd to the *Virgin Mary*, who is but a Creature after all, than to our Dear *Saviour*, who is *GOD* the *Creator*?

Quere XI. I am told, *Reverend Fathers*, That towards the latter end of the Fourth *Century*, a certain *Sect* of Women did appear, which met together, to offer certain *Cakes*, and otherwise to Worship the Virgin *Mary*, which Cakes were call'd *Collyrides*, and the Women from them *Collyridians*: and that the good Bishop, St. *Epiphanius*, did write zealously against them, and treated them as *Heretick*s, and said, *Let Mary be honour'd, but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Worshipped.* Now, *Reverend Fathers*, I desire to know of you, Whether this is true? and, Whether we do not offer *Candles and Incense* to the *Virgin Mary*? And if those Women were *Heretick*s for offering Cakes to her, Pray what are we for offering up to her Candles? Pray where's the difference between *Cakes* and *Candles*, as to their being made an *Offering*? Does not this Example abundantly Confute those Men, who say, It is impossible that any now should be so foolish to make a *GOD* of her, and Worship her with that Worship which is due to *GOD only*? For if there were People so grosly silly to commit Idolatry about her, Pray why not much rather now? Are not the present allow'd *Doctrines* and *Prayers*, capable enough to draw People into the like Crime? And are there not both Women and Men too, in this Age, of as weak Understandings, and of as *Superstitious and Idolatrous* Inclinations as then?

Quere XII. I am told, *Reverend Fathers*, that the aforementioned Cardinal *Bona*, in his said Book, Entituled, *Horolog. Ascet.* tells us, That the *Rosary* is so call'd, because 'tis Compos'd of *One Hundred and Fifty Ave Maries*, *as of so many sweet-smelling Roses*: Now I humbly beg of you to know the true reason, Why the *Ave Maries* are *Roses* rather, and smell sweeter, than the *Pater Nosters*? When a Man reflects, that the *Pater Nosters* are of our dear *Lord's* own composing, he is apt to think, that they might deserve the name of Roses as well, and smell, at least as sweet as the *Ave Maries*, the one being a *solemn Prayer* contriv'd and dictated by the *Eternal* Wisdom, for the

the needs and benefit of his poor Creatures, and the other only a common *Form* of one *Creature's Saluting* another, and which by I know not what authority, nor with what pertinency, is since converted into a *Form* of *Religious Prayer*. And do not you really think, *Reverend Fathers*, that this magnifying the Excellency, and the Odour of the *Ave Maries*, above the *Pater Nosters*, is not, to speak softly, a little contrary to the Laws of Good Manners?

Quere XIII. Whether the *Honour* that is due to a glorified *Soul*, ought to be any more than that of *Love or Charity*, *Respect* and *Imitation*? And whether in our allow'd *Prayers*, &c. we do not give to the Virgin *Mary*, and other *Saints*, that of *Service* as to our *Lords* and *Masters*? And whether that *Honour* or *Respect* that is to be given to a *Saint*, or an *Angel*, or an *Image*, must not be such as is proper to a *Saint*, or an *Angel*, or an *Image*, and not *Worship* or *Adoration*?

Quere XIV. Whether the *Common* People understand the nice *Scholastical* Distinctions, and Degrees of *Divine Honour and Worship*, which 'tis said our cunning *Doctors*, and subtil *School-men* have devis'd to excuse our Doctrines and Practices from *Idolatry*, such as *Latria*, *Dulia*, and *Hyperdulia*? As you hope to be saved, *Reverend Fathers*, Do you believe that the more *ignorant* Men and Women, nay, the more *knowing* Persons, when they are in the Act of *Prayer* and *Adoration*, do, or can make use of these nice and learned *Distinctions*, and make this just separation in their minds? And *yet* if they do not, is not their falling into *Idolatry* unavoidable? To what fatal Dangers are we poor *Catholicks* expos'd!

Quere XV. But to conclude this matter of *Invocation*, &c. I farther enquire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether you can shew any footsteps of *Prayers to Saints*, for the first 300 years (I have heard that some Learned *Protestants* dare give you 350 years) after *Christ*, in any genuine *Father*, or publick *Office* or *Liturgy*? If it had been the Doctrine and Practice of that time as 'tis now amongus, can it enter into any but a mad Man's head, to believe that it would not be found either in some publick *Office* or *Liturgy*, or in some of the *Fathers*, in that compass of time? And if we cannot make it appear to have been the Doctrine and Practice in all that time, for God's sake, *Reverend Fathers*, What reason have we to make such a considerable *addition* to the *Religion* of those *Ages*? Why may not we be saved now without it, as well as the *Christians* then? But, *Reverend Fathers*, I am

farther

farther told, which in my mind is an invincible argument against us in this affair, *viz.* That the *Protestants* have made it plainly appear from the Writings of the *Ancient* Fathers, both *Eastern* and *Western*, by the *Greek Canon*, the *Liturgies*, father'd upon St. *James* and the other *Apostles*, and the *Liturgies* of St. *Basil*, and those of *Egypt* attributed to St. *Basil*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, and St. *Cyril*, and that of St. *Chrysostom*, and by the *Mozarabical Office* us'd in *Spain*, that whereas we *now* Pray *To*, the *Christians then* Pray'd *For* the Souls of the *Patriarchs*, *Prophets*, *Martyrs*, *Confessors*, *Preachers*, *Evangelists*, and *Apostles*, and all the Souls of the *Just* which died in the *Faith*, but chiefly for the *Holy*, *Glorious*, *and Perpetual Virgin Mary*, *the Mother of* GOD. Now I desire to know of you, Whether any *Protestant* Writer has done this? or whether it is true or false? But if these things are true, and can be made appear, as I am pretty sure they can, then I desire to know, Whether the *Protestants* cannot with great Truth and Justice make these Conclusions upon us, 1. That our Church and People now *prays*, and makes their *Confession To* those *very departed Souls*, *For* which the ancient *Christians* pray'd. 2. That the Prayers which were *then* in use, were for such Persons as by the confession, even of our selves, never were in *Purgatory*; for who among us dare say, that the Soul of the B. *Virgin* ever was in *Purgatory*? 3. That the Ancients Practice of praying for the *Dead*, does not at all prove their belief of a *Purgatory*, and that there may be Prayers for the *Dead*, and yet no *Purgatory*. 4. That the *Christians* of those Times did not believe the *Saints departed* enjoy'd *Beatifical Vision*, and so to be sure did not pray to them. For is it not a little too gross to think of them, that if they had believ'd the *Saints* enjoy'd *Beatifical Vision*, they would still pray *for* them? And if they had believ'd that the *Saints* did not enjoy *Beatifical Vision*, is it not to treat them like *Mad-folks*, to think they would pray to them. And, 5. and lastly, May not all this be allow'd to make up a *Demonstration*, that at least, in these *Articles* of *Invocation of Saints*, and the belief of *Purgatory*, &c. our *Faith*, *Doctrines* and *Practice*, are quite contrary to the *First Christians*?

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Quere I. PRay, *Reverend Fathers*, What is that *lawful Use of*, and *due Honour and Veneration*, which the Council of *Trent*, *Session* 25, says, Ought, and is to be given, *to the Images and Relicks of Christ and the Saints*? Wherein does it consist? And by what acts, words, and signs, is it to be signify'd and expres'd? Is it the same that is due to Christ and the Saints, or is it some other different from that? Whether these words of the *Council* (*Lawful and Due*) does not necessarily imply, that the *People* may be guilty of giving an *unlawful*, and an *undue Honour and Veneration*? and if so, Wherein does that consist? And how may I know it to avoid it? Why was not the *Council* so *kind* and so *honest* to tell us, poor ignorant *People*, what was lawful and due, and what was not? Whether in your Conscience you do not think, that in those Countries where *Catholicks* have their full *swing*, and have a full liberty of *Worship*, and no-body to oppose and disturb them with questions, as in *Spain*, *Italy*, &c. a great many ignorant People do not exceed in their *Use*, *Honour*, and *Veneration* of *Images* and *Relicks*, and really give them what is *unlawful* and *undue*? And if so, may not a Man reasonably doubt (especially too, when he considers that the Fathers of this *Council* own'd, that great Abuses were then crept into these Matters, and gave such strict Charge to the Bishops to *instruct* the People, least they should fall into dangerous Errors) that this Doctrine, and this *Piece* of *Devotion* of our *Church*, does very greatly tempt ignorant Men and Women to *Idolatry* and *Superstition*? Besides, I think, *Reverend Fathers*, you grant, that it is not a *Duty* commanded by *GOD*, Why then, since there is apparent danger in it for, and great Abuses and Cheats practis'd by, those of our *Communion*, and that it is a very great *Block of Offence* to the *Reformed Churches*, and hindrance to their being *re-united* to us, were it not infinitely better and wiser of our *Church*, if she entirely abolish'd it?

Quere II. Whether more *Respect*, &c. is not due to the *Person* of the meanest *Beggar*, than to all the *Images*, &c. of Christ and his Apostles, or ten thousand Saints, because 'tis thought that the *Poor* are indeed the true *Image* of *Jesus Christ*?

Quere III. Whether it can be deny'd, that there have been *Images and Pictures* made to counterfeit Tears, Words, and Gestures? Is it not highly suspitious that the Churches connivance at them, at least, was to induce silly People to believe there was something of *Divine* in them, and to procure *secular* Honour and Advantage to the *Pastors*, &c. If this was not the reason, I desire to know, Why so long

they were conniv'd at, and suffer'd in many *Places* and *Countries*? And whether the multitude of fictitious and false *Relicks*, the supposititious *Saints*, the *Images* of a *false Beauty*, and the pretended *New Miracles*, make it not highly reasonable for us *Catholicks* carefully to enquire into the truth of these things, before we admit and believe them? And since the Council of *Trent* in the same *Session* speaks of these kind of Abuses, and gives charge about them, I desire of you, *Reverend Fathers*, to know by what *Infallible Rule* we People must examine these matters, so as that we cannot possibly be deceiv'd with Counterfeits? And I humbly intreat you sincerely to tell me, Whether these *Tricks*, *Abuses*, and *Cheats*, were not at first brought in, and practised upon the *Credulity* of the poor ignorant and superstitious *People*, and afterwards kept and nourisht by the *Clergy*, for *dishonest and base gain*, as the aforesaid *Decree* speaks? And whether in these days we have not as much reason to question the truth of *Relicks*, *Images*, *Miracles*, &c. and dishonest Practises and Designs, as they had in former times? And if we have not, I desire you to assign me good substantial Reasons for it.

Quere IV. I am told, *Reverend Fathers*, that since the Council of *Trent*, there's a new *Pontifical*, and in that a *Form* for a Solemn *Consecration* of Images, &c. Now I humbly enquire for the true reason, Why you *Consecrate*, and make Prayers in the *Consecration* of *Images*, and the *Crucifix*? Is not this a very fair way to induce *silly* and *superstitious* People, to believe there's after that, some sort of Divinity in them, or some more than ordinary *Presence* or *Operation* in, or by them? Else, pray tell me, Why many of us have a greater opinion of one *Image*, than of another of the same Person? and in one *Place* rather than in another? For instance, the *Image* of the Virgin *Mary*, Why is it not as effectual and meritorious to Worship her before her *Image* at *Montserat*, as at *Mont-Aigu*? and near at *Rome*, as at *Lorretto*? Why do we go long and painful *Pilgrimages* to certain *Images* at certain *Places*, if it is not, at least, in hopes of being better heard, and finding more sure relief for praying to, and worshipping of her there? Would not a wise Man be apt to think here's something of *Trick* and *Artifice* in this *Doctrine* and *Practice*? But I humbly enquire of you, What is the true and honest account and reason of this whole Matter? What proof from *Scripture*, or what authority from prime *Antiquity*, for this Practice?

Quere V. Pray, *Reverend Fathers*, What's the meaning of that *Prayer* which the Bishop uses in Blessing, and Consecrating a *New Cross*, found in the *Pontifical*; *viz.* "We pray thee, O Lord, &c. "that thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless this *Wood* of thy Cross, that

"it

' it may be a wholsome Remedy to Mankind, a ſtability of Faith,
' an increaſe of Good Works, the Redemption of Souls, a comfort,
' protection and defence againſt the evil Darts of the Enemies, through
' our Lord, &c. ? And alſo of that *Hymn* or *Prayer* found in the
*Brev. Sab. ante Domin. Paſſ. & Feſt. invent. Crucis. Hail, O Croſs, our
only hope, increaſe Grace in the Godly, and blot out the Sins of the Guilty?*
I profeſs, *Reverend Fathers*, theſe two Prayers infinitely trouble my
mind: for I cannot for my life underſtand, but that we make the
material Wooden Croſs an Object of Divine Worſhip, and directly pray
unto it, or elſe that theſe Prayers are perfect nonſence. But be pleas'd
to let me ask you a few Queſtions. After the Biſhop has pray'd,
Bleſs this Wood, is the *Croſs* ſtill *natural Wood*, and the ſame it was
before, or is its nature chang'd and alter'd? and is there ſome Vir-
tue and Excellency communicated to it? Elſe, What means theſe
Words, *Bleſs this Wood?* Do we pray unto, and Worſhip *this* Croſs,
or that on which our *B. Saviour* was Crucified? But let it be which
it will, Is it not groſs *Idolatry* to make either of them the Object of
Adoration, and directly to pray to either of them? If we ſay, that
we do not pray to either of them, nor make either of them the Ob-
ject of Adoration, but Jeſus *Chriſt* who ſuffer'd upon the *Croſs*, then
where's the ſence of this Prayer, *Bleſs this Wood*, &c. and *Hail, O
Croſs*, &c. What an unhappineſs is this! And would not any ratio-
nal Man think the Compoſers of our Prayers, and the *Church* too,
were both of them conſtantly *infatuated*, to make choice of ſuch
Words and Expreſſions in their Prayers to GOD and our *B. Savi-
our*, that to take and underſtand them in the ſence and meaning of
the Compoſers, and of the Church, we muſt do violence to all the
Rules of Grammer, and to the plain and natural, and generally re-
ceiv'd ſence and meaning of Words and Speech?

Quere VI. I enquire, *Reverend Fathers*, Whether our diſtinguiſh-
ing, and ſaying we do not give Divine Worſhip *terminatively*, but
relatively, and *tranſientiy*, to a Crucifix or to *Images*, &c. will ſave
us from *Idolatry*, any more than it did the *Heathens* in their Wor-
ſhip of the *Sun*, and wooden *Images*? And whether the ſame Plea,
if it will excuſe us from groſs *Idolatry*, might not as well excuſe
them? *viz.* That we do not Worſhip that *Crucifix*, or that Image,
&c. which we ſee and pray before, but him who ſuffer'd on't, or
him whom it repreſents; ſo they, We do not Worſhip the *Sun* or
this *Image* or *Statue*, but him who Created the *Sun*, and the Great
GOD, by this *Image*, and this *Statue*?

SECT. V.

Quere I. PRay, *Reverend Fathers*, What is the reason, why *anciently* the People of our *Church* us'd to pray thus, *Grant unto us, O Lord, that this Oblation may profit the Soul of thy Servant* Leo? And that afterwards this contrary Form was us'd, *Grant unto us, O Lord, that by the Interest of thy Servant* Leo, *this Oblation may profit us?* Was *Leo* one of our *Popes*, and a *Saint* in *Purgatory* when the first *Form* was us'd? And was he out of *Purgatory*, and in *Heaven*, when the Second *Form* was us'd? What Infallible Assurance have we, that any Soul is releas'd out of Purgatory, and in particular, that he is now out of Purgatory? And if we have not, How come we to use this last Form of Prayer? But pray, *Reverend Fathers*, deal ingenuously with me, Do Glorious *Saints*, Canoniz'd and Reigning in Heaven, use to pass through *Purgatory* fire? Was St. *Monica*, St. *Austin's* Mother, in Purgatory? Can ye prove she was there? Or do ye think, and can ye prove, that St. *Austin* believ'd her there when he pray'd for her? And if she was not in *Purgatory*, Does it not prove that the Ancients us'd to pray for the *Dead*, which yet they did not believe in *Purgatory*? Why then do we pray for none, but those we believe in Purgatory? Where is our *Conformity* to the Belief and Practice of the *Ancients* in this matter?

Quere II. Does our Church, *Reverend Fathers*, teach, That all *Souls*, none excepted, who are so happy to be saved, must, and do pass through the Fire of *Purgatory*? If she does, and likewise that our Prayers, *&c.* do help them, How can we in Charity justifie our constant Custom of not praying for the *Departed Souls* of *Protestants*? Do we believe that the *Protestants* living and dying such, are not finally saved, but damn'd? Does not this sound harsh to *Christian* Charity? And does not this our neglect of offering up Prayers, and saying *Masses* for their Souls, openly declare to the World our uncharitableness? And that we believe the Soul of every Person living and dying in the *Reform'd Religion* is damn'd? since we never fail of offering up *Prayers* and *Masses* for those Souls of whom we have the least hope of Salvation?

Quere III. Do not you, *Reverend Fathers*, reckon the *Reformed* Religion to be *Christian*? Why then do ye teach us to think and call it a *New Religion*? Are the Three *Creeds*, the Ten *Commandments*, the Lords *Prayer*, and the Holy *Scriptures* of the *Old* and *New* Testament, New? And yet I am pretty well assur'd these are the Foundation, and contain the whole of their *Religion*. Why then do ye ask them, and teach us to do so, *Where was your Religion before* Luther? Where's the Justice and the Truth of this? Is it not plain, that

GOD

GOD and our *B.Saviour* are the Authors of this *Religion*? But, *Reverend Fathers*, What if they should ask us, as sometime I have been askt, without being able to answer a word, *Where was your Religion before the Council of Trent?* what should I say? For my part, I have lookt till my eyes are weary, and cannot find a word, either in the Three *Creeds*, the Ten *Commandments*, the *Lord's Prayer*, or the Holy *Scriptures*, that our Saviour has forbid us to Receive the Communion in Both Kinds; that the Bread and Wine, by Virtue of the Priest's saying, *Hoc est*, &c. is transubstantiated into the very natural Flesh, Blood, Bones, and Sinews, and the Soul and Divinity of our Dear *Saviour*; that we must Pray to GOD in a Language we understand not; that *Saints and Angels* are to be Worshipp'd with *Religious* Worship; that Mens Souls go to *Purgatory*, before they go to Heaven; that the Pope of *Rome* is Christ's Vicar; and that the Church of *Rome* is as Infallible as GOD; with many other Points, and Doctrines, too long here to be named at this time.

Quere IV. Pray, *Reverend Fathers*, Had the *English* Bishops and Pastors in *Henry* the Eighth's Reign, and at the time of the *Reformation*, by Virtue of their *Ordination*, &c. receiv'd from *Rome*, Power and Authority to Preach and Teach the Truth of the *Gospel*, and *Reform* all Errors and Corruptions in Faith, Doctrines, Worship, and Manners, within their own Jurisdictions, Dioceses, &c.? If they had not, How were they *God's Ambassadors*, Ministers, and Dispensers of the *Gospel*, which is nothing else but Truth and Holiness? If they had, and that the *Reformed* Faith, Doctrine, and Worship is the Truth of the *Gospel*, were not all our Forefathers in Conscience bound to hearken to, and obey them; and not only for that reason, but also because they were their *Lawful Bishops* and *Pastors*? And for the same reason are not we now bound to hearken to, and obey the present *Bishops*, and *Pastors* of the Church of *England*, who are their *lawful* and undoubted Successors?

Quere V. Pray, *Reverend Fathers*, What *Council* or *Pope* has declar'd and *decreed* against *Rebellion*, let one's Natural *Prince* be of what *Religion* he will, and never so contrary to the *worldly* Policy and Interest of *Rome*? I would fain hope, that you can satisfie me in this *Enquiry*, because I have often heard our *Church* tax'd for a *Disloyal Church*. But further I enquire, Whether no *Council* or Pope has ever declar'd and decreed, nor *Cardinal*, or *Jesuit*, writ and maintain'd, That in many cases, but especially when *Princes* are not of the *Religion* and Interests of the Church of *Rome*, it is lawful to cut them off? And has there been no *Treasons* committed, nor *Rebellions* acted, not only by the *Laity*, but also by the *Clergy*, and even by the *Pope* himself, in conformity and obedience to such *Decrees* and *Doctrines*?

Quere VI. What is the meaning I beseech you, *Reverend Fathers*, of that Book which is *Intituled* in *English*, *The Tax of the Apostolick Chamber for several Sins*? The *Protestants* often upbraid us with it, and really I know not what to answer, because I have enquir'd and find there is such a *Book*, and more, that 'tis authoriz'd and allow'd by our *Church*. But I am much puzled to find out a good meaning of it. Methinks it sounds a little harsh to Christian ears, that for any sums of *money* at all, there should be, either *Indulgence* given to commit sins, or a pardon procur'd after they are committed, and this Publish'd to all the *World*! Does not this look like *tempting* and inviting men to be *wicked*?

Quere

Quære VII. If it be true, *Reverend Fathers*, what the Protestants charge you and the rest of the *Guides* of our *Church* with, as that you deny men the use of their *Senses* and *Reason* about Religion, and so would debase them into the condition of mere *Brutes*, is it not just to esteem you the common Enemies of Mankind? For to what end and purpose did *God* give us these *Faculties*? was it only think ye to govern our selves in worldly affairs? And did not the wise and good *God* likewise endue us with *Sense* and *Reason*, that we might preserve our selves from being *imposed upon* and *cheated* by a false and *absurd* Religion? Now what Design can that Man or Company of Men be rationally thought to have, who would rob *Mankind* of the only means which *GOD* has given them to preserve themselves from being *deceived* in so mighty a Concernment as *Religion*? And from being made wretched *Slaves*, to wicked and *designing* Men? And on the contrary, Are not the *Divines* of the Church of *England*, and other *Protestant Churches* to be highly *valued and lov'd*, because they earnestly invite Men to the Exercise of their *Senses* and *Reason* about *Religion*, and propound no Doctrines but what tends to the improvement and perfecting of *Human*, as well as *Divine* Knowledge, and ennobling the Nature of *Man*, which certainly is the Great Design of the *Christian* Religion?

Quære VIII. Whether your way of conducting *Religion*, and managing *Controversies* by Tricks and Arts, and exposing the whole *Christian* Religion, for the sake of some unreasonable Doctrines and Propositions, by making *Parallels* between the Doctrine of the *Trinity* and *Transubstantiation*, and making the First to depend only upon the *Authority* of the *Church*, because the Second has no better Foundation. Is it not, I say, enough to set the Hearts of *thinking* Men against you?

Quære IX. In the 22 *Session*, *Chap.* 8. *Of the Doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, the Council of *Trent* says, *That although the Mass contains a large Instruction of a Faithful People, yet it is not convenient to be exercis'd publickly in the Vulgar Tongue.* How, *Reverend Fathers*! *A large Instruction for the People*, and yet not convenient to let the People understand it? Were not the Good *Fathers* of the *Council* a little *merry* here, as well as mysterious? But pray be you pleas'd to be *serious*, and tell me, What do you think might be the true reason why these *Wise* and *Holy* Men thought it inconvenient to have *Mass* said in the *Vulgar Tongue*? Does it look kind and *Christian*-Father like, that altho' they confess the *Mass* was a *large Instruction for the People*, yet that they should at the same time Command to keep the People ignorant of it, except only some parcels of it, now and then to be dealt out to them? This manner of acting from *Christian* Fathers to their Children, appears to me extraordinary, and therefore pray satisfie me about it, and tell me, what were they afraid of? And what inconvenience would have follow'd, suppose Mass had been publickly said, for example, in *English*? Why so much *Policy* and *Cunning* in our managing of *Religion*? I must needs tell you that I am scandaliz'd at it. For when a Man considers the *Christian* Religion, he finds that certainly never was there a more *plain*, *simple*, and inartificial *Religion* than it. And since the wise *GOD* thought fit so to propound it to Mankind, how dare you and the rest of the *Pastors*, &c. manage it like the *Juggles and Intrigues*

Intrigues of a *State*. Will not a serious *Reflection* on this, make thinking men apt to suspect our *Church* Governours and *Spiritual* Guides, and so by consequence the *Doctrine and practices* of our *Church* too? And do ye think that wise men observing our *Religion* to be mixt with so much *Craft* and *Worldly Policy*, and that many of our *Doctrines*, such as *Purgatory* and *Indulgences*, &c. plainly tend to serve Worldly Ends, do not furnish them with mighty Prejudices against our Church-men?

Query X. Whether, with wise and honest men, it is not, Reverend *Fathers*, a vast and just prejudice against our *Church* and *Cause*, that our Writers of *Controversie* are so perpetually by the *Protestant* Divines charg'd with using *Supposititious* and *Spurious* Authors, and such as the *Honest and Learned* men of our own *Church* disallow of? And whether on the contrary, it is not both a good sign, as well as a mighty credit and advantage for the *Reformation*, that its *Defenders* are never charg'd by us with alledging and quoting *false and counterfeit* Authors, but can maintain their Cause against us by *true and genuine* Authors and Writings? Is not this a plain Confession, that either our Writers of *Controversie* are grosly *ignorant*, and know not which are *genuine*, and which are *counterfeit* Authors, or very dishonest, if they do know them, and yet use them, and impose them upon the World, and that the points in difference cannot otherwise, on our side, be defended?

Query XI. Whether the *Pope's* pretensions to *Infallibility and Supremacy*, instead of being a means to obtain and preserve *Unity*, is not one of the greatest *Impediments and Obstacles*, that ever stood in the way of the *Peace and Unity* of the *Catholick* Church? And also are not these pretensions of the Pope, the true *Root and Cause* of all the *Schisms*, *Wars*, *Bloudy Massacres*, acted by our people upon the poor *Protestants*, and the *Miseries and Confusions* that have been in the *Church* and *State*, in this and other Countries for these many hundred years? And whether, according to all *humane* and *rational* Probability, we might not far sooner hope, to see *Unity and Concord*, *Peace and Love* in the Church *Universal*, and between one *National* Church, and one *Christian* man and another, if this great *Block of Offence* were remov'd? And in a word, Whether there can be any *rational* hopes of *Unity or Peace*, either in *Church* or *State*, till the *Court* of *Rome* is destroy'd, and the *Pope* reduced both to the *Name* and *Condition* of a *Primitive Bishop of Rome*?

But, *Reverend Fathers*, I am come to the intended limits, and a *conclusion* of my *Letter*, before I have near finish'd my *Enquiries*. For a multitude of other troublesome *Thoughts*, *Doubts*, *and Scruples*, in very important matters, crowd in upon me, and press for room here. But I must bear with their company, till a fairer occasion. It may be they shall be the subject of a *Second Letter of Enquiry*. But I humbly beg you to give me a speedy Answer to *this*. For pray consider, how uneasie 'tis to dwell with a *dissatisfied Conscience*! Besides, I must needs tell you, that since your *great Prudence* has thought it for the advantage of our Church and Cause (which nevertheless some wise men wonder how you could) to publish in the Vulgar Tongue our *Canons*, &c. and the *Catechism* of the Council of *Trent*, and that I am now convinc'd *Ignorance* is not such a rare and commendable *Virtue*, nor so great a Friend to *Devotion*,

Reverend Fathers,

Your most Obedient Servant,

A. B.

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